

Good News Daily
The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd

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Sunday, January 29

Mark 8:22-30 *And the man looked up and said, "I can see people, but they look like trees, walking."* (v.24 NRSV)

On February 3, 1468, Johann Gutenberg, who invented the printing press, died in obscurity. His invention lifted the written word from monastery scriptoria to movable type and made mass production of the Bible possible. Gutenberg, however, did not enjoy the fruits of his labor. Gutenberg had gone to Johann Fust for a loan to finance his system of printing. Fust foreclosed on the loan just when Gutenberg was in production of his famous 52-line Bible. Fust threw Gutenberg out, took over the business, finished the Bible, and made a fortune.

We sigh with sadness at the recollection of individuals who have been taken advantage of by others. Let's remember the opposite is also true: there are many persons who haven't taken advantage of wonderful and extraordinary opportunities.

Such could have been the case with Jesus and the blind man from Bethsaida. When the blind man could see—but not clearly—he could have been satisfied or he could have just given up. I believe it was his faith-filled desire for Jesus to touch him again that brought the second touch. This time, he saw clearly.

Our communication with the Lord must be constant. If we know we are blessed but somehow need extra strength to meet the tasks ahead, let's just ask the Lord for that second touch.

Genesis 18:16-33; Psalms 24, 29; Galatians 25:13-25

Include in your prayers: Krystal Pierce, Carol Block, Lori Zenobia, Tony Montgomery, Louise, Frank LePore, Jack P., Michelle and family, Sheila Gimbel, Diane Spero, Mary Ann Pfohl, James Baur, Peter Swistock, Helen Church, Bobby, Betty Anne Schlegel, Dave Dimon, Lillian Lewis, Norma Pumphrey, Barbara Phillips, Biby DaVila, Norman Hinman, Jackie Schmidbauer, Nancy Olssen, George, Melissa, Sally, Dick & Tom Shea, Amanda Smith, Tim Grimes, Seth Mark Madison, John Reynolds, Wendy Williams, M.J. Dutchess, Cindy Croushore, Victor Ranieri, Darlent Davis, Phyllis, Susan

Monday, January 30

John 6:27-40 *Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."* (v.35)

While he was lecturing at Melbourne University, Viktor Frankl, the noted Swiss psychiatrist, was given the gift of a boomerang. After some reflection, he noted the boomerang to be much like those persons who had failed to find meaning in life. The boomerang is prized because it returns to its thrower. But that only happens, he observed, when the boomerang "fails."

Only when the boomerang misses the target does it return to the thrower and, in that fact, Frankl saw the whole of human existence. A person will "return to himself to be concerned with himself only after he has missed his mission," Frankl reflected.

How like our quest for bread! Jesus spoke to crowds of under-fed persons who understood bread quite literally. For us today, bread may mean possessions, security, love, or personal

significance. We toil for this bread and, eating it, we merely survive. How unlike the bread Jesus offers.

He must be our target—our mission for living. For only by the living bread he supplies, is the hunger of our deepest being satisfied.

Genesis 19:1-29; Psalms 56, 57, 58; Hebrews 11:1-12

Include in your prayers: Ken, Nico Clothier, Adele Herbert, Suzanne Turner, Patricia McMahon, Nancy Donovan, Bob Schollmeyer, Genevieve Flynn, Larry Bischoff, Kaye Bischoff, Rusty Miller, Matthew Ruppell, Ann F., Diane, Herb Fleck, Duchon Family, Terri and Diane, Irene Habernickle, Beverly Habig, Wally Bates, Dianna Nuquist, Pat Douglas, Priscilla Fisher, Vicki McFale

Tuesday, January 31

John 6:41-51 *“Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life.”* (v.47)

The Emperor Charlemagne sat on his throne, dressed in flowing imperial robes with a magnificent crown on his head, a scepter in his hand, a sword at his side, and a copy of the Gospels in his lap.

And he was dead.

The year was 814 and the throne was beneath the floor of a chapel in Prussia. Although his tomb was sealed, the people wanted Charlemagne to be alive. The tomb was opened two hundred years later and again in 1165. In 1215, Frederick’s grandson ordered the remains sealed in a golden casket and the throne placed in the cathedral.

Death is no welcome intruder, but how sad it is to deny its presence. Physical death is a reality all must come to accept, but the greater reality is that life through Jesus Christ is eternal. Although death may rob us of our body, it cannot destroy our soul.

In the midst of sadness, this is wonderful good news.

Genesis 21:1-21; Psalms 61, 62; Hebrews 11:13-22

Include in your prayers: Robert Hutton, Debbie, Emily Block, Rhiannon, Margaret Martin, Nancy, Lori Norris, Priscilla, Amy, John Murdock, Gordon, Elizabeth Perry, Maggie, Gerald Orban, Joan S. Schmidt, Tom Kroll, Petey, John Gepfert, Ida, Jack Burdensiek, Casey Lee Gibbons, Earl and Diane Seely, William Kelly, Anita Scarpa, Diane Manuel, Tom Pariseleti, Hallie Mylotte, Pat Cohen, Peter Hollis, John Christopher Garabrant, Arline Henderson, Karin Armbruster, William Newman, Patty Wagner, Diane McQuillen, Gina Alexander, Don Pampena, Thelma McHale, Joseph Womack, Stephanie Transue, Jerry Karlan, Erica, Eric Mac

Wednesday, February 1

John 6:52-59 *The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”* (v.52)

What a question for the Jewish mind! Indeed, what a question for anyone who might be taking Jesus’ words literally. To the non-Christian, the idea of actually eating flesh is abhorrent as, indeed, it should be. Cannibalism is certainly not the teaching. But the image is probably more than a metaphor.

Although ritual has its purpose, the central focus of Christianity should be one of *relationship*—relationship with the person of Jesus Christ. It must be an intimate sharing of his very essence, and how better could one describe it than as body and blood.

The words of Thomas à Kempis challenge us: “Jesus hath many lovers of His kingdom, but

few bearers of His cross. All are disposed to rejoice with Him, but few to suffer for His sake. Many follow Him to the breaking of the bread, but few to the drinking of His bitter cup.”

Jesus gives himself to us that we may drink of this cup.

Genesis 22:1-18; Psalm 72; Hebrews 11:23-31

Include in your prayers: Jason Bolton, Leslie Hahn, Patty Hart, Richard Downing, Emmy Smith, Marilyn, Marie Oberacker, Dee Hanson, Jim Freese, Frank Alneida, Amy Kuryla, Lance Block, Jim Krainski, Brooke Waton, Jeanne Wilhelm, Jack McKenna, Valentine Houyvet, George Kinard, Joe D’Alessandro, Walter L., Katie Kish, J.D. Butler, Rowena Renn-Hicks, Katie Nehls, Grandma Jean, Verna Trella, Russell Remington, Tamra Webster, O’Toole family, Devon Quigley, Mark Currin, John Hollenberg, the Reardon family, Bob Nilsen, Joe Lopez, Claire and Tim Wilson, Megen Moran, the Hoey family, Sean Ernst, Louise Rockrode, Norman Singer, Tim Grant, Todar family, Janice Bradley, Rose Adams Randall, Jessica Matthews

Thursday, February 2

John 6:60-71 *Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil.”* (v.70)

Sigmund Freud’s concept of the adult personality is meeting with much disagreement. It states that a person’s character and disposition may, in later years, be altered but not changed. Psychologists now say that a person isn’t really washed up if the first three years of his or her life didn’t quite jell. Carl Jung described personality as a growing process—not what one is, but what he or she is constantly becoming.

Any vacuum can be filled. One never eliminates hate until he pours out a lot of love. One never eliminates anger until he becomes saturated with understanding. One never eliminates greed until he can place another’s happiness on an equal level with his own. Gossip is never eliminated until one starts looking for the good instead of the bad.

Is this not true of God’s mission for His Church? We should understand that even His chosen ones might turn against Him. Let’s eliminate those qualities within ourselves that do not work for the building of the Kingdom.

Genesis 23:1-20; Psalms 70, 71; Hebrews 11:32—12:2

Include in your prayers: Alex, Elizabeth Johnston, Gary and Cindy Hogan, Linnea, Evelyn Corell, David Bradford, Helen Pace, Ruth Dans, Debbie Rannie, Peg Beasley, Norma Millar, Grace, E.J., Elise, Jim Riley, Gail Godek, Mike Rossi, Marie Pelikan, John Schmidt, Marvin Branscomb, Ryan Miller, Maurice Porter, Don and Shirley Themm, Chris and Kathy Nolte, Zachary Aaron, Rose Valentine, Joseph Murphy, Lydon family, Manuel family, Ashley, Rosemary Desmond, Hilary Montgomery, Nancy Vrechek, Hallock Martin

Friday, February 3

John 7:1-13 *For not even his brothers believed in him.* (v.5)

I saw it happen again yesterday—the old “bonsai treatment.” It’s the world’s worst form of robbery. The sad part is that it is perfectly legal.

The “bonsai treatment” is the best description I can think of to illustrate the censorious actions of a large segment of our population who derive particular delight in finding fault with other human beings. I call it that because the procedure is so similar to the Oriental art of dwarfing trees. It takes a special art to cultivate bonsai trees. Their clever beauty is achieved by painstakingly tying off the trees’ taproots again and again. The end product, just a few inches tall, is an exquisite conversation piece.

Some folks think their role in life is dwarfing people, and apparently even Jesus' brothers were guilty. Some Christians take pleasure in limiting the Church. They'll go out of their way to tell you why you should aim your sights low. Since they consider themselves your friends, they do not hesitate to tell you to be realistic.

Too often, as individuals and as church members, we fail to understand that the power of Jesus Christ is not limited by our small, incomplete concept of reality. The power of faith is in its mystery and in God's power to transcend our ability to understand.

Genesis 24:1-27; Psalm 69; Hebrews 12:3-11

Include in your prayers: Lillian Sroaka, Julia Dillon, Shirley Connell, Abigail, Rose Kyle and family, Mark Warburton, Elizabeth Dunn, George Dzama III, People of Haiti, Sara Sharpless, Jenny Sharpless, Society of St. Margaret, Sue Morie, Zack P., M.J. Becker, Gary Carter, Joe Hall, Point Bates, Toni and Joe Zedrosser, Edward Hutton, McClain-Huslage family, Richard Yandow, Ava Schmidt, Lisa Roznick, Rick Schmitt, Bob Wallace, Lori Z., the Posey family, Stan Connell, Deborah Wittington

Saturday, February 4

John 7:14-36 *Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.* (v.24)

I have my mind made up!

How many times have we said that? We value self-confidence and it is important, if not essential, in any witness for Christ or in the obtaining of any goal. It is easy, however, to let self-confidence become arrogance. It is also possible to lack self-confidence and become self-obsessed. Whenever one does become so thrilled with his or her own significance (or preoccupied with their insignificance), that person is likely to make judgments on appearances without thinking the situation through or considering others.

Stop. Think it over. Base your decision on right judgments. Never let self-confidence cloud your vision or confuse your thinking. Decisions made on appearances lead to poor choices.

But, no matter how well developed our self-confidence is, we must never lose sight of the fact that our confidence, to be truly effective, must be in God. If we trust God to lead us in the right direction, to guide us to the best answer, then we will be both successful and happy.

We must learn to trust in God's judgment, not our own. Our trust and confidence must be in God's power to fulfill His purpose for us.

Genesis 24:28-38, 49-51; Psalms 75, 76; Hebrews 12:12-29

Include in your prayers: our country: for wisdom and guidance for our leaders and the leaders of all nations: for our armed forces, especially those now in combat: including: Dean Joseph Parker, Sgt. Steven Hallaway, Carl Grebe, Robert Stillman, Vincent Marcano, Joey Lail, Daniel DeLapiña, David Stegman, James Post, Harold Fitch IV, Gregory Campbell. Pray for our enemies; for peace, justice and reconciliation in all places where there is conflict, especially among the peoples of the Middle East. Please pray for Todd and Patsy McGregor and the people of Madagascar.

by Lee Miller

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