

Whispers of the Spirit



Meditations for May 2nd to May 8th

Whispers of the Spirit is a ministry of Deacon Carolyn Quinnell and friends.
This week's selections have been written by Deacon Carolyn, with the exception of the one for Tuesday,
which was written by Deacon Bob Quinnell.

Sunday, May 2nd Acts 8:26-40 / Psalm 22:24-30 / 1 John 4:7-21 /
John 15:1-8

John 15:2 *He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.*

Have you felt the pruning shears of God lately? Consider this, if plants produce more fruit when they are pruned, it makes sense we would as well. So, yes, this passage speaks to us today just as it did when Jesus spoke these words. But how are we pruned? That's probably as individual as each of us is. What's important to remember is that the Lord does the pruning in a manner that is good for each of us. He does not leave us alone during this process, but tends to our needs.

Lord, help me to be thankful for the pruning you give. Amen.

Monday, May 3rd Wisdom 9:1, 7-18 / Psalm 56, 57 /
Colossians (3:18—4:1)2-18 / Luke 7:36-50

Psalm 56:10 *In God the Lord, whose word I praise, in God I trust and will not be afraid, * for what can mortals do to me?*

This same message is also found in verse 4 – twice in the same psalm. Therefore, we should take special note of what it is saying to us: trust God and don't be afraid. We may think, "That's easy for the psalmist to say, but what if..." There is fear in the "what if." There is anxiety in the "what if." For some, there is a need to control in the "what if." Here's another type of "what if" for you. What if you give that fear, that anxiety, that need to control over to Jesus and DON'T TAKE IT BACK? Matthew 11:28 tells us, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,

and I will give you rest.” Trust Jesus with your heavy burdens. He knows what to do with them.

Thank you, Jesus, for carrying my load. Amen.

Tuesday, May 4th Wisdom 10:1-4 (5-12) 13-21 / Psalm 61, 62 /
Romans 12:1-21 / Luke 8:1-15
(today’s meditation is written by Deacon Bob Quinnell)

Romans 12:15 *Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.*

As Deacons, Carolyn and I are frequently given pastoral opportunities. We have been asked to pray for other people for a variety of issues. It is not a ministry limited to clergy alone, by any means. Each of us is called to be a companion and friend to others, which includes sharing their grief as well as their joy. As humans, we are more likely to look for someone with whom to share our grief. Perhaps we should be more deliberate in allowing others to share in our joys as well. That way we will more often be heard saying, “Hallelujah, Praise the Lord!”

Lord, help me share your joy with others. Amen.

Wednesday, May 5th Wisdom 13:1-9 / Psalm 72 /
Romans 13:1-14 / Luke 8:16-25

Wisdom 13:5 *For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator.*

When we visited Sequoia National Park in California we read that some of the trees were at least 2,000 years old. At the time, that would have made them saplings when Christ walked this earth. When we visited the Grand Canyon we could not help but say, “Wow,” when we stood on the rim and looked first one way then the other. When we stood at the base of a waterfall and allowed our eyes to follow a single drop of water as it plunged from the stream above to the pool below, we could not help but think of all the pieces that make up the whole. Yes, there is beauty of created things all around us. But not only in nature. There is also beauty

in the faces of all of God's people. For all of creation, no matter the form it takes, we say, "Thank you, God."

Thank you, Father God, for all of creation. Amen.

Thursday, May 6th Wisdom 14:27 - 15:3 / Psalm 71 /
Romans 14:1-12 / Luke 8:26-39

Luke 8:31 *They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.*

Fr. Bill Rodgers led several bible studies during his time at St. Mary's and one of them touched on this particular bible passage. The "they" mentioned here is the demons which Jesus had just cast out of the Gerasene demoniac. I asked why the demons didn't want to go back to the abyss, because after all they are demons. His answer was, "Well, because it's hell and they don't want to be there any more than we do." Hmm...I guess I can see that. Which leads to another question: If we have been through an experience in our lives that we would describe as "hell on earth," would we willingly go back to it? And, a different question: Did you realize Jesus was there with you at the time?

*Jesus, thank you for being with me in all things and through all things.
Amen.*

Friday, May 7th Wisdom 16:15-17-1 / Psalm 106:1-18 /
Romans 14:13-23 / Luke 8:40-56

Luke 8:55 *Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he directed them to give her something to eat.*

Why did Jesus tell the little girl's parents to give her something to eat after he raised her from the dead? Because ghosts don't eat and he wanted them to realize their little girl was not a ghost but had been brought back to life. Can you imagine the questions this little girl would have been asked out on the playground? Were you really dead? What was it like? Did it hurt? Did you want to come back to life? We all have questions about death and the dying process. Those questions are natural, after all none of us knows when or

how we are to depart this life. We haven't yet been to "the other side" so we don't really know what to expect; with the single exception that our faith tells us Jesus will be waiting for us there and because of that, we can look forward to being welcomed into His kingdom.

Jesus, thank you for opening your loving arms to us. Amen.

Saturday, May 8th Wisdom 19:1-8, 18-22 / Psalm 75, 76 / Romans 15:1-13 / Luke 9:1-17

Romans 15:4 *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.*

There is a show on PBS I like to watch called "Central Florida Road Trip." Each episode deals with towns or areas in our part of Florida and touches on the history behind them. For instance, did you know Ocala was once referred to as "brick city" because of a fire that took place Thanksgiving morning of 1883 which burned many of the lumber-built buildings in the downtown area? Afterwards the city was rebuilt using bricks and stone, which made it unique from other cities in Florida.

In much the same way as "Central Florida Road Trip" educates us about our local history, so does scripture educate us about our spiritual history. If you think about it, would we know who King David was if no one had written anything about him? What about Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist or even Jesus himself? While it's true there are many different writing styles in the bible (prose, history, allegory, etc.) we get a sense of who we are as Christians by knowing the "back-story" that came before us. In that back-story, God never left the people of Israel. They sometimes turned their backs on him - but he never left them. From that we can have hope that he will never leave us either.

Thank you, Father, for being with us. Amen.

