

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for April 21st to April 27th

Nudges of the Spirit is currently a ministry of Deacon Carolyn Quinnell, Sandy Freiburger and Denise Bersos.
This week's selections have been written by Sandy.

Sunday, April 21st Psalm 23 / Acts 4:5-12 / 1 John 3:16-24 / John 10:11-18 *(written by Sandy)*

Psalm 23:1 *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.*

I have a version of Psalm 23 that I have carried for years. The Daughters of the King (DOK) have used it as a bookmark at their annual teas. I used to make these bookmarks for my mother. She started the DOK at St. Mary's. I will share it with you in paragraph format.

O Lord my shepherd, when I am thirsty, fill me with...A cup of Quietness for you make me to lie down in green pastures and lead me beside still waters. A cup of Encouragement for you restore my soul. A cup of Forgiveness for you lead me in the paths of righteousness for your name's sake. A cup of Trust for though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. A cup of Communion for you are with me. A cup of Strength for your rod and staff comfort me. A cup of Thanksgiving for you prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup runs over. A Cup of Service for surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Fill my cup Lord for I will dwell in YOUR house forever.

My Lord, My Shepherd please keep me in your fold. Amen.

Monday, April 22nd Psalm 41, 52 / Exodus 32:1-20 / Colossians 3:18—4:6(7-18) / Matthew 5:1-10 *(written by Sandy)*

Exodus 32:1 *...come, make gods for us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.*

The Israelites were growing impatient and confused at the same time. They were quickly growing uneasy, because they had expected Moses to appear sooner than this. They were also confused as to the reason he hadn't returned. We too, often expect what we want, when we want and usually the time frame is right now. I am reminded of one of my favorite verses in Isaiah 40:31, "but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." As difficult as it may be, we need to be patient for God and wait quietly for His answer. I am currently waiting for God to give me direction in a big change in my life. Although I would like the answer today, I need to be patient and wait on God's timing. If you are asking for guidance and direction, do not give up on God like the Israelites did with Moses. Trust that God will provide your path to follow and He will set you on it in His time.

Come Lord Jesus, come. Amen

Tuesday, April 23rd Psalm 45 / Exodus 32:21-34 / 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 / Matthew 5:11-16 *(written by Sandy)*

Matthew 5:13 *"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?"*

I remember being in the kitchen when Mom was preparing a meal for us. I would often hear the phrase, "this needs some more salt" or "just a pinch more salt." Salt is one of those things that can complete the taste of a dish. Salt is even necessary for us to live a healthy lifestyle, but too much can be a bad thing. Jesus said we are the salt of the earth. Being disciples of Jesus makes it absolutely necessary for us to spread his word. If we do not live in commune with God, we will lose our saltiness and the desire to please him. If this should happen, we must seek restoration with God. Once our faith is restored, our testimony will once again be present to all. And we become the light of the world by showing the way to the Jesus. Let's all consider having a "come to Jesus" meeting with our Lord. I promise your salt flavor will be restored.

Amen

Wednesday, April 24th Psalm 119:49-72 / Exodus 33:1-23 / 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 / Matthew 5:17-20 *(written by Sandy)*

Psalm 119:72 *the law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.*

Almost everywhere you look these days you will see advertisements about investing in precious metals. People are talking about the economy crashing; no banking systems and cash won't work to pay for things needed. This may be true and we may have to fend for ourselves for a time. These metals are physical objects to use for bartering according to the conspiracy theorists. According to the verse above, the law of God is better. I believe it and I hope you do also. I hear people speak of passages in the Bible to support these theories but just like other things, people can put a slant on their version. Psalm 119:64 says, "The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love, teach me your statutes." We are living in difficult times for sure but we can stop and take time to enjoy our time with God and rest in His assurances that he has us hidden in the shadow of his wings. With this in our heart and mind, we know that we can survive an earthly catastrophic event. If we don't, we shall be in Heaven with our God.

Father, God, help me to live in your statutes. Amen

Thursday, April 25th (St. Mark) Psalm 2 or 2:7-10 / Isaiah 52:7-10 / Ephesians 4:7-8, 11-16 / Mark 1:1-15 or Mark 16:15-20 *(written by Sandy)*

Mark 1:12 *and the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.*

Today's passage in Mark depicts the Spirit in 2 separate views. Verse 10 tells us the Spirit is like a dove; peaceful, gentle and kind. In verse 12 we read of the Spirit driving Jesus into the wilderness. According to Merriam-Webster, drive means to "frighten or prod" or "to impart a forward motion to by physical force." Wow! Two totally different descriptions of what the Spirit can do. I prefer the Spirit that is gentle like a dove. However, there are times in our lives when we are a "stiff necked" people and the other depiction of the Spirit is necessary. It is important for us to remain near and open to the Spirit as we will be guided by His actions. Jesus was probably driven by the Spirit because of his human nature. Let's consider that for a while.

Holy Spirit, I love the love you show me. Amen

Friday, April 26th Psalm 40, 54 / Exodus 34:18-35 / 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13 / Matthew 5:27-37 *(written by Sandy)*

Exodus 34:28 *He was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water.*

In yesterday's reading we read about Jesus being driven into the wilderness to fast 40 days and 40 nights. The number 40 shows up in the Bible multiple times. 40 days and 40 nights can seem like a very long time because it is most often used biblically to show testing and trials. Lent is 40 days also which depicts the number of days we should reflect on what Jesus did for our atonement. When Noah was in the ark, it rained 40 days and 40 nights. There are many other citing's about the number 40 in the Bible. There were no months like the ones we experience today but the 40 days that characters in the Bible were subjected to none the less seemed like a long time. We are called to answer God's call, not worrying about how long it will be, but to do the task(s) He asks of us. And, just like Moses whose face was shining or Noah's sighting of the rainbow, God will see us through.

Here I am Lord. Amen

Saturday, April 27th Psalm 55 / Exodus 40:18-38 / 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 / Matthew 5:38-48 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 55:1 *Give ear to my prayer, O God; do not hide yourself from my supplication.*

Do you ever feel like God is not listening when you pray? It may well be that God is listening just fine, but your will is not lining up with God's. Perhaps, just maybe, you have unconsciously decided to tell God what and how to do things. I find I can get in this mode quite easily when someone close to me is in a health crisis. There are times when I would like God to just perform a miracle and get on with healing this person I'm praying for. Yet, it is not my will, but His. He may want the healing to come through medicine and/or surgery. One of the hardest lessons to fully

grasp is that our ultimate healing comes when we are called home to heaven. God is not hiding Himself from us, He's waiting for us to align our wills with His.

Lord, help me get out of your way. Amen.