

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for October 1st to October 17th



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

Sunday, October 11th Exodus 32:1-14 and Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23 OR Isaiah 25:1-9 and Psalm 23 /
Philippians 4:1-9 / Matthew 22:1-14 (*written by Carolyn*)

From the 1st line of the Collect for today: *Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us...*

The theme of grace runs through several of our readings for today. Certainly, Isaiah talks about God providing for His people, while Psalm 23 speaks of our Good Shepherd. Even Paul encourages Euodia and Syntyche to have grace with each other and asks those around them to help them out as they do so. My question then is this: How have I shown grace today? That (of course) requires a bit of self-examination, which is not always a comfortable thing to do. The prayer asks that the Lord's grace may always precede and follow us; in other words, we can't stockpile it up on a good day to draw against on a bad one. It's a bit like exercise: it may require a pep talk to get going, but once you do, the rewards are good.

Father, thank you for the grace you have shown me. May I return that love by showing grace to those around me. Amen

Monday, October 12th Micah 7:1-7 / Psalm 1, 2, 3 / Acts 26:1-23 / Luke 8:26-39 (*written by Carolyn*)

Luke 8:39 (Jesus said) *"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you."* So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

Every time I read this story I wonder what kind of family life the man had before the demons entered him. Did he have an occupation? Was he married? Can you imagine being this man's wife, parent, child, sibling or employer? What would have to happen to convince you that he was now healed? I presume it would, in part, be obvious by his very demeanor but there would still be doubts in some people's minds as to whether or not this was a clever ruse, or if it was for real. It's quite possible that there was more healing that happened in that region than just the cleansing of the demoniac. We aren't told that part of the story, but I would hope it was the case. I hope a family was restored and people came to believe in Jesus by this man's testimony. Just like I would hope someone was touched by Jesus because of our testimonies. What is He asking you the share this day?

Lord, guide us in our words about you. Amen

Tuesday, October 13th Jonah 1:1-17a / Psalm 5, 6 / Acts 26:24-27:8 / Luke 8:40-56 (*written by Carolyn*)

Acts 26:29 Paul replied, *"Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that not only you but also all who are listening to me today might become such as I am – except for these chains."*

Paul had been given a mission to accomplish in the name of Jesus, and he was ready and willing to try and convert anyone anywhere, even as he was giving his testimony before a King. I can't help but admire his courage. When I was (much) younger, my aim in life was to "make a difference for just one other person." I didn't have any specifics in mind, but somehow, I believed that if I could bring just one person a tiny step closer to Christ, that would be good enough. I probably won't know if I truly accomplished that goal until I have passed from this life to the next. That's OK. Until then I can use Paul as my example. Will you do likewise?

Lord, help me to show your love to those around me. Amen

Wednesday, October 14th Jonah 1:17-2:10 / Psalm 119:1-24 / Acts 27:9-26 / Luke 9:1-17 (*written by Carolyn*)

Acts 2:10 *Then the Lord spoke to the fish, and it spewed Jonah out upon the dry land.*

Have you ever considered the role of the giant fish (whale?) in this story? It was completely obedient to what God wanted it to do. First, it swallowed Jonah (without chewing and eating), then it kept him in his stomach for a specified time, then it managed to “spew” Jonah out on shore, presumably without a scratch. I can’t help but wonder if it felt immense relief once Jonah was out of its system. Hopefully, it was able to then go and enjoy a good meal that provided some much-needed nutrition. Sometimes the Lord calls us to be a supporting character in a story – much like the fish. Supporting characters are important because they help things move along. They aren’t the stars, but they are nevertheless much needed.

Lord, when you call me to be a supporting character, help me to serve in a way that is pleasing to you. Amen

Thursday, October 15th Jonah 3:1–4:11 / Psalm 18:1-20 / Acts 27:27-44 / Luke 9:18-27 *(written by Carolyn)*

Acts 27:43a *...but the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan.*

Yesterday we looked at the giant fish as a supporting character in the story of Jonah. Today we have another someone who helps move the plot along according to God’s will: the centurion. So far, in just this reading, he’s stopped the sailors from abandoning ship and also stopped them from killing the prisoners, of which Paul was one. We don’t know the name of the centurion, but God does. The Lord used him to further Paul’s progress to Rome so he could testify to the faithful there and before the emperor. What story has the Lord cast you in as a supporting character? We never know how our seemingly benign actions will affect someone else. That’s OK, the Lord knows.

Lord, direct me in all things. Amen

Friday, October 16th Ecclesiasticus (in the Apocrypha) 1:1-10, 18-27 / Psalm 16, 17 / Acts 28:1-16 / Luke 9:28-36 *(written by Carolyn)*

Acts 28:8 *It so happened that the father of Publius lay sick in bed with fever and dysentery. Paul visited him and cured him by praying and putting his hands on him.*

I heard a priest say once that there are no coincidences, only God-incidences. It would seem that the shipwreck was directed by the Almighty for the purpose of introducing the Word of the Lord to the inhabitants of the small island of Malta. There are God-incidences that happen every day. Sometimes we see them, other times we say, “Oh, that was lucky,” and give no credit to God. Perhaps, when we are tempted to chalk something up to luck, we should get in the habit of saying, “Praise God” instead. That way, if He really did coordinate our circumstances, we’re giving Him the credit. If He didn’t, well it never hurts to come out with a random “Praise God” at any time – right?

Lord, open my eyes to see your hand at work in the world about me. Amen

Saturday, October 17th Ecclesiasticus (in the Apocrypha) 3:17-31 / Psalm 20, 21:1-7(8-14) / Acts 28:17-31 / Luke 9:37-50 *(written by Carolyn)*

Ecclesiasticus (aka Sirach in the Apocrypha) 3:23 *Do not meddle in matters that are beyond you, for more than you can understand has been shown you.*

Whenever it comes to problems with engines (car, lawnmower, whatever), I get a “deer in the headlights” kind of look. My husband would try to explain what was going on, but he might as well have been speaking a foreign language. Since his passing I have had to rely on owner’s manuals, my son and/or people from church. It’s good that I have resources I can rely on because, quite frankly, none of us are supposed to know everything that affects

every aspect of our lives. Sometimes we have to ask for help. The same goes for our spiritual lives. Sometimes, we have to seek help from those around us. Sometimes, we have to ask Jesus.

Help me, Jesus. Amen

