

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for March 1st to March 7th



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

Sunday, March 1st Genesis 12:1-4a / Psalm 121 / Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 / John 3:1-17 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 121:3 *He will not let your foot be moved and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.*

Have you ever given any thought to people who are working while you are asleep? The first group that comes to my mind are the public servants – firefighters, police, EMTs etc. For them I am very grateful because if I have an emergency in the middle of the night, I know there is someone I can call. I happen to have two relatives who often go into work during the wee hours of the morning – like 2 or 3 am. One works for a bread company and the other in the bakery at Costco. They are very busy making sure customers have what they need when stores open for the morning. Just as there are those who work while we sleep, God is also on the job day and night. What that means is those times when we can't seem to sleep because of some pressing issue, we can (and should) take our cares and concerns to Him.

Lord, thank you for being with us always. Amen

Monday, March 2nd Daniel 9:3-10 / Psalm 79:1-9 / Luke 6:27-38 *(written by Carolyn)*

From the Collect for today: *Let your Spirit, O Lord, come into the midst of us to wash us with the pure water of repentance, and prepare us to be always a living sacrifice to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

When you think of the word repentance, what is the first thought that comes to mind? Consider that the word implies (according to an on-line dictionary) a complete change of character. Other sources say it means to literally turn around. Both of these suggest something we do – a solid effort on our part. How about if we look at repentance as a turning to God and accepting the love He has to give us. How about if we ask Him to help us do the heavy work and simply embrace His grace? While it is still something we do, somehow that seems easier than me trying to fix myself.

Lord, I come to you. Help me accept your grace. Amen

Tuesday, March 3rd Isaiah 1:2-4, 16-20 / Psalm 50:7-15, 22-24 / Matthew 23:1-12 *(written by Carolyn)*

From the Collect for today: *Deliver us when we are tempted to regard sin without abhorrence, and let the virtue of his passion come between us and our mortal enemy; through Jesus Christ our Lord...*

My niece asked my sister once why they never bought any snacks for their house. The reply was, "If we don't have them available in the house, we won't be tempted to eat them." I can relate very well to that. If you think about it, that applies to many areas of temptation and can be extended out to not only what is in our homes but also who we keep company with, the type of shows we watch and even the kind of work we choose to pursue. As the portion of the prayer above states, we are to let the love and sacrifice of Jesus come between us and that which tempts us to sin. Think of it as looking through a Jesus filter. Is what I am about to do something the Lord would do?

Lord, help me to look through the filter of your saving grace. Amen

Wednesday, March 4th Jeremiah 18:1-11, 18-20 / Psalm 31:9-16 / Matthew 20:17-28 *(written by Carolyn)*

Jeremiah 18:4 *The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.*

My mom and I tried taking a pottery class once (emphasis on the word once). Neither of us could master the art of throwing a piece on the wheel, but we could make shapes out of the clay itself – much like what kids do with playdough. While our poor pottery skills may have been a bit of a let-down at the time, we each realized we had been blessed with other gifts instead. I thank God that He made us a diverse people with different skills, talents and gifts. We are blessed, and if we use our gifts to His glory, we are doubly blessed. What would He have you do today?

Lord, thank you for making me – me. Amen

Thursday, March 5th Jeremiah 17:5-10 / Psalm 1 / Luke 16:19-31 *(written by Carolyn)*

Luke 16:24 *He called out, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames."*

Did you notice that the rich man expected to be waited on in death, just as he had been in life? And, what a demeaning thing to ask Lazarus to do! However, before I can condemn the rich man too much, I have to ask myself, "When and where do I expect to be waited on, and by whom?" Do I drive as though I own the road? Do I cut people off when they're speaking? The Collect for today asks the Lord to turn our hearts from sin. I need that – daily. Sometimes I am my own worst enemy.

Lord, as the Collect says, turn my heart from sin and my mind from that which is passing away. Amen

Friday, March 6th Genesis 37:3-4, 12-28 / Psalm 105:16-22 / Matthew 21:33-43 *(written by Carolyn)*

From the Collect for today: *Grant, O Lord, that as your Son Jesus Christ prayed for his enemies on the cross, so we may have grace to forgive those who wrongfully or scornfully use us, that we ourselves may be able to receive your forgiveness...*

Forgiveness – sometimes it's hard – really hard. When someone hurts either one of my children or my husband, all of a sudden mamma bear wakes up in me and all I want to do is protect them. Considering my youngest just turned 43, this has been going on for quite some time. The thing is, they don't really need my protection. What they need is my love and support. The portion of the collect cited above implies that our own forgiveness depends on our forgiveness of others; that is what we pray when we recite the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive others...". I've known people who held grudges for years, and there always seemed to be a dark place in their soul. Sometimes, what we need to pray is, "Lord, help me to want to forgive." Over time, He can and He will.

Lord, help me to forgive as you forgive me. Amen

Saturday, March 7th Micah 7:14-15, 18-20 / Psalm 103:1-4(5-8)9-12 / Luke 15:11-32

Luke 15:32 *Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."*

Who do you identify with in this story? Most of the time, people will pick either one of the two sons or even the father, but what about looking at this from the perspective of one of the servants? True, they are hired workers, but apparently, they are adequately taken care of since the wayward son thought their situation was far better than his was when he was starving and feeding pigs. I'm sure they had their own opinions about what should have taken place when the younger son walked home. Their job was not to question, but to do. How many times have we found ourselves in a similar position? Sometimes, we are called on to be an observer – and keep our thoughts to ourselves. That doesn't mean we don't also learn valuable lessons though. Quite possibly, one or more of the

servants needed to see the extravagant forgiveness offered by the father. Perhaps they too were either lost themselves, or withheld forgiveness in their own situation, and needed to see what redemption looked like.

Lord, help us to learn by observation. Amen

