

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for May 3rd to May 9th

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

Sunday, May 3rd Acts 7:55-60 / Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 / 1 Peter 2:2-10 / John 14:1-14 *(written by Denise)*

Acts 7:55 *But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.*

Stephen is known as the first Christian martyr. He was stoned to death after being falsely accused of blasphemy. Our beloved Paul in the Bible (who did not know Jesus at this time) was named Saul of Tarsus when Stephen was stoned to death. At this time Saul was persecuting Christians, and approved Stephen being stoned to death. What a story with twists and turns. Because of Stephen's death Christians who were being persecuted fled and spread the Gospel in different places. Stephen, who was full of the Holy Spirit, gave everything. As our relationship with the Lord grows, we too can take our last breath, not as a martyr, but in peace for we shall see God in all his Glory.

Holy Spirit, enter our hearts in this moment. Take away any fear that might be embedded in us and replace it with the Glory of God. Amen

Monday, May 4th Leviticus 16:1-19 / Psalm 56, 57, (58) / 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 / Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 *(written by Denise)*

Matthew 6:15 *But if you do not forgive others their sins, your father will not forgive your sins.*

I had the privilege of following on-line 19 Venerable Monks and their dog Aloka walk 2300 miles on a Walk for Peace. I watched them whenever I could and listened to their talks. When I first heard about the Walk for Peace, I thought it was only a walk. I quickly found out that they were teaching each of us that peace begins within. They taught people that they are each suffering because of their own thoughts, reactions, not being in the moment and multi-tasking. If we cannot calm our bodies down, then how can we hear the still small voice of God? If we do not forgive others and instead carry all that suffering of unforgiving in our minds, it becomes an idol in front of God, and we then don't surrender to God's glorious Grace.

Jesus, thank you for all the ways you teach us valuable lessons. May each of us learn to let go of our suffering thoughts, and turn to you to transform us with forgiveness, grace and love. Amen

Tuesday, May 5th Leviticus 16:20-34 / Psalm 61, 62 / 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 / Matthew 6:7-15 *(written by Denise)*

1 Thessalonians 5:6 *So then, let us not be like others who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober.*

The Bible is very clear that there are no times and dates that are recorded as to when the LORD will come back. The Bible is also very clear that the LORD will come back. We do not know what moment or what day, and so it would be beneficial for us to be ready at any moment, so it does not catch us by surprise. Paying attention to our breath, thanking God, and being aware every moment means we are awake. Each breath we take is a gift from God. God has breathed life into us. Let's all stay awake and sober, so we are ready when the time comes.

LORD, may every breath we take remind us of the breath you gave us so that each one of us can be who you created us to be. Amen

Wednesday, May 6th Leviticus 19:1-18 / Psalm 72 / 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 / Matthew 6:19-24 *(written by Denise)*

Psalm 72:19 *Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen*

Can you imagine how beautiful our world could be if everyone was praising God's name. There would be no time for stealing, for gossip, for anger, for resentment. We would be living in a world where peace, love, compassion, and health would be our guiding force. We would all be loving God with our hearts and souls and loving our neighbors as ourselves. With some painful, hard lessons, I know I cannot change other's hearts. God can. I know God has changed my heart, so today I will be praising God's name, and I guarantee my little world will be filled with glory. Want to join me?

LORD, we are praising your name, and we love you with all our heart and soul. Shower your glory upon us. Amen and Amen

Thursday, May 7th Leviticus 19:26-37 / Psalm (70), 71 / 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12 / Matthew 6:25-34 *(written by Denise)*

Leviticus 19:32 "Stand up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the LORD."

Our church has elderly folks, and I am one of them. I love to watch our Priest interact with us all. He is younger than most of us are, and he truly respects each of us. You see his eyes light up when he greets us, and he is always offering to help in any way he can. I had surgery last year and he insisted on coming to the hospital to pray for me before I went in for my surgery. I felt so loved and cared for. I have several women in our church who are my mentors. They share their experience and knowledge with me in their ministries. I am so grateful for them. We do all this because we love God with all our hearts and all our souls.

LORD, we love you! May we always take care of our members, so they feel loved and cared for. Amen

Friday, May 8th Leviticus 23:1-22 / Psalm 106:1-18 / 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 / Matthew 7:1-12 *(written by Denise)*

Matthew 7:3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"

Great question. This has taken me many years to understand and truly practice. When someone does something to upset me, I immediately have to look at myself. I say, "You spot it, you got it." I have to get past the story, the drama, and look at the behavior. Is the person I am upset with being controlling, maybe being judgmental, or just downright rude? When I can identify the behavior, then I have to do the honest work of looking at myself and seeing where I am doing that same behavior in my interactions. It may have a different story line, but the behavior is what I am looking for. If I can't see it, I call a friend that is honest with me and ask her where and when she sees this behavior in me. Then and only then can I be willing to see the truth and ask God to help me forgive the person that upset me, as well as forgive myself. Then I ask God to help me change and be aware of this behavior, as to not cause harm to others.

God, help us to look at ourselves when we are upset with someone else. Let us slow down enough to see the planks in our eyes. Amen

Saturday, May 9th Leviticus 23:23-44 / Psalm 75, 76 / 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18 / Matthew 7:13-21 *(written by Denise)*

2 Thessalonians 3:5 *May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.*

Living in God's love is such a gift. God is love! This life can be tough sometimes. Jesus knows this personally. By studying the Bible and living by his example we can learn to persevere through the tough terrain. There is a slogan that says, "First things first." This means the first thing I must do before I do anything else is connect with God and have him direct my heart. The first thing I do when I open my eyes in the morning: Connect with God. If I continue to do this throughout the day, I have a blessed day.

LORD may our hearts be pure and may we look to you in all we do. Amen

