

Nudges of the Spirit

Meditations for April 12th to April 18th



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, April 12th Acts 2:14a, 22-32 / Psalm 16 / 1 Peter 1:3-9 / John 20:19-31 (*written by Carolyn*)

From the Collect for today: *Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery established the new covenant of reconciliation: Grant that all who have been reborn into the fellowship of Christ's Body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith...*

According to the on-line Cambridge dictionary, the word reconciliation means: 1) a situation in which two people or groups of people become friendly again after they have argued or 2) the process of making two opposite beliefs, ideas or situations agree. For me, the first definition is a given but the second one I had to sit and think about for a bit until I realized that those who witnessed the risen Jesus would be in that group. After all, people have known for ages that dead means dead and people simply don't get up and walk around again once they die. Yet, Jesus did just that. The preconceived notions of the populace had to be reconciled with what took place. It took faith to believe what happened back then. It still does to this day.

Lord, I believe. Amen

Monday, April 13th Exodus 14:21-31 / Psalm 1, 2, 3 / 1 Peter 1:1-12 / John 14:(1-7) 8-17 (*written by Carolyn*)

1 Peter 1:2a *...who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood...*

If you were raised in a Christian home and baptized at an early age, you may have always taken your identity as a follower of Christ for granted. Every now and then we need a bit of a reminder of whose family we belong to. I seem to receive a lot of advertisements from a certain company promising that if I use their services I will be greatly enriched by knowing all about my ancestors. However, you and I live with a bit of double identity. Yes, we have our genealogical histories, but we are also Christians. Through Christ, God is our Father. If we don't remind ourselves of that from time to time, the world's views can infiltrate our thinking. We then run the risk of beginning to think of ourselves in terms of social status, wealth, background, intelligence levels, looks, etc. That's not what Jesus did. Let's look to Him for our best example.

Lord, let me see with your eyes. Amen

Tuesday, April 14th Exodus 15:1-21 / Psalm 5, 6 / 1 Peter 1:13-25 / John 14:18-31 (*written by Carolyn*)

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.*

Jesus spoke these words to his disciples at the meal prior to his arrest and subsequent crucifixion. I wonder if they let their hearts be troubled, or if they took refuge in His words. Almost 10 years ago, when we lived on a small lake, I heard the Lord say several times, "Trust me, the trees will protect you.". A hurricane was in the Gulf, and the path of the storm was close to our house. As it passed overhead, two oak trees were uprooted. One fell within a foot of our house. The larger second tree's fall was broken by some smaller pine trees which prevented damage to our roof. The Lord used our trees to block damage to our house - and we slept through the whole thing.

Thank you, Lord, for watching over us in ways we don't realize. Amen

Wednesday, April 15th Exodus 15:22-16:10 / Psalm 119:1-24 / 1 Peter 2:1-10 / John 15:1-11 (*written by Carolyn*)

Exodus 15:26 *He said, "If you will listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is right in his sight, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you."*

Did you notice the "if"? There seems to always be an "if". In other words, while we cannot do anything to earn the Lord's favor, we can believe in and do those things which He calls us to do. The last few lines of the verse really jump out at me: "for I am the Lord who heals you." They imply that the Lord is healing us in ways that we cannot know. Think about it, just going to the grocery store has the potential to expose us to all types of germs, yet we do not succumb – perhaps because the Lord has given us an immune system to fight them off. If, however, we test the Lord by deliberately trying to get sick – well we may find we do in fact become ill. The Lord tells us to do what is right in His sight and keep His statutes. He doesn't tell us to test every boundary He gives us.

Lord, help me to follow you. Amen

Thursday, April 16th Exodus 16:10-21 / Psalm 18:1-20 / 1 Peter 2:11-25 / John 15:12-27 *(written by Carolyn)*

Exodus 16:10 *And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.*

Think back to the place and time you saw the most glorious sunset you've ever seen. My physicist husband would say the prettier the sunset, the more particles of dust or water droplets there are in the atmosphere which bend the rays of light into the beautiful colors we see. While I appreciate the scientific explanation, I love the fact that our Lord uses the elements of His creation to show us His glory. What a gift our senses are that we can see, hear, feel, smell and even taste the goodness of all creation. The Israelites saw the glory of the Lord in the cloud while they wandered in the desert. We can see His glory all around us, if we only open ourselves to take Him in.

Lord, thank you for the beauty all around us. Amen

Friday, April 17th Exodus 16:22-36 / Psalm 16, 17 / 1 Peter 3:13–4:6 / John 16:1-15 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 16:11 *You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Every day we make choices: Do I get up or stay in bed a little longer? What clothes should I wear? What should I eat today? These all seem pretty mundane for most of us who are healthy and can get around on our own. We also make choices in other areas though: Things like whether or not to interact with others and, if so, how? We choose to worship the Lord and/or read His word. Those last two are very important to me, because through worship and study I can gain an understanding of which of the paths that lie before me is the one the Lord would have me take. And following His path has made all the difference in my life.

Lord, show me your way. Amen

Saturday, April 18th Exodus 17:1-16 / Psalm 20, 21:1-7(8-14) / 1 Peter 4:7-19 / John 16:16-33 *(written by Carolyn)*

1 Peter 4:9 *Be hospitable to one another without complaining.*

As I was typing the word hospitable, I couldn't help but notice how close it seemed to be to hospital. Being the curious type I looked up their origins. What I learned is that the word "hospital" originates from the Latin "hospes," meaning guest or stranger. It evolved through Old French to mean a place of hospitality for travelers and the needy. Later it came to be associated with a place of healing for the sick. Hospitality means being welcoming to others. So, when we think about our parish families, are we a hospitable place for those who come, and will they find healing within our walls?

Lord, help me to welcome others as you would. Amen

