

# Nudges of the Spirit

## Meditations for June 21<sup>st</sup> to June 27<sup>th</sup>

*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, June 21<sup>st</sup>** Genesis 21:8-21 and Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17 or Jeremiah 20:7-13 and Psalm 69:8-11 (12-17) 18-20 / Romans 6:1b-11 / Matthew 10:24-39 *(written by Carolyn)*

Psalm 69:19 *Hide not your face from your servant; \*be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.*

Lord, I need an answer and I want it NOW! How typical is that? It's a bit like asking God to give us patience. We mortals tend to forget that the Lord's timing is different than ours. In our defense, it's when we are in trouble, danger, sick, whatever, that we tend to turn to God in prayer. Do we seek Him as readily to give praise or to say thank you? Quite often, on a Sunday morning when I have a lengthy gospel to read, I will ask Jesus to help me. I'm trying very hard to remember to thank Him for doing so right after I finish reading. Here's a challenge: the next time you approach the Almighty in prayer, spend the first few minutes in praise and thanksgiving.

*Lord, we know you hear our prayers in all situations, and we thank you for that. Amen*

**Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>** Numbers 16:1-19 / Psalm 89:1-18 / Romans 3:21-31 / Matthew 19:13-22 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 19:13a *Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray.*

We once had a parish priest who had a special way with kids. At the time of the sermon, he would sit on the steps of the altar and give them their own special lesson before sending them off to Sunday School. I do believe the adults got just as much out of those lessons as the kids did. Since he had children of his own, quite often the young people of the congregation were friends with his kids, so in a sense they saw him as their friend's dad. What a special gift that was to the young people; what a special gift it was to the adults too because sometimes we need to be good friends with someone who knows God as their heavenly Father in order to draw nearer to Him also.

*Abba, thank you for being our dad. Amen*

**Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>** Numbers 16:20-35 / Psalm 97, 99 (100) / Romans 4:1-12 / Matthew 19:23-30 *(written by Carolyn)*

Romans 4:4 *Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due.*

Toward the end of the service of Baptism, the priest or bishop places a hand on the head of the person being baptized and says, "(their name), you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own forever. Amen." God's grace has just been given to that person. They did nothing to earn it, especially in the case of an infant baptism; it is completely free. Therefore, there is nothing we can do to earn God's love. It's up to us to accept what has been given freely to us – and then love the Lord in return. What that looks like will be different for each of us. Some will become prayer warriors, others will be doers of good deeds, still others will pursue ordained ministry – the list is endless. But we all begin at the same place – being loved by God.

*Abba, thank you for loving us first. Amen*

**Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>** (Nativity of St. John the Baptist) Isaiah 40:1-11 / Psalm 85 / Acts 13:14b-26 / Luke 1:57-80 *(written by Carolyn)*

Isaiah 40:3 *A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3 and Luke 3:4, all reference this verse from Isaiah and relate it to John the Baptist, whose nativity we celebrate today. Yet each one changes it a bit from what Isaiah said (according to the NRSV translation). For instance, Matthew writes, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” Isaiah seems to tell the prophet to go out to the wilderness and clear a road, while the three gospels seem to have the prophet already in the wilderness preaching to people. It’s a subtle difference, but one that prompts me to ask, “Where is the wilderness?” While in John’s time it was surely outside of town, by the Jordan River where he was doing his ministry. Today, we tend to listen to preachers either in person, through podcasts or via YouTube. Therefore, our wilderness may look very different from John’s. That’s OK. The Lord still meets us where we are.

*Thank you, Jesus, for finding me in my wilderness. Amen*

**Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup>** Numbers 17:1-11 / Psalm 105:1-22 / Romans 5:1-11 / Matthew 20:17-28 *(written by Carolyn)*

Numbers 17:8 *When Moses went into the tent of the covenant on the next day, the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted. It put forth buds, produced blossoms, and bore ripe almonds.*

When I read this verse, I am reminded of the feeding of the multitudes where Jesus took just a few fish and loaves of bread and provided for many. If God the Father can bring life from a dead piece of wood, then Jesus the Son, who only does what He sees the Father doing, could of course feed many people with just a little to work with. That gives me hope because no matter how “dead” or “unfulfilled” I may feel on the inside, our Lord can take what is in me and bring about something for the furthering of His kingdom. That, my friend, is fantastic news. All we need to do is offer ourselves to be used by the Almighty.

*Lord, take my life and let it be, always only for you, my King. Amen*

**Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>** Numbers 20:1-13 / Psalm 102 / Romans 5:12-21 / Matthew 20:29-34 *(written by Carolyn)*

Matthew 20:32 *Jesus stood still and called them, saying, “What do you want me to do for you?”*

Whenever my husband and I take communion to someone who, for whatever reason, is unable to attend the regular Sunday worship service, I ask the question, “Is there anything in particular you would like prayers for today?” Sometimes that question catches people off-guard. I can sympathize because just this past Sunday we were asked by two separate members of our local chapter of the Daughters of the King if we were in need of prayers ourselves. It’s easy for us to volunteer to help or pray for someone else, but when we’re on the receiving end it feels a bit strange. Yet, our two blind men in today’s gospel had no problem asking Jesus for mercy. They knew exactly what they wanted. Can we be as open as they were?

*Lord, guide me to ask only what is in accord with your will. Amen*

**Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup>** Numbers 20:14-29 / Psalm 107:33-43, 108:1-6(7-13) / Romans 6:1-11 / Matthew 21:1-11 *(written by Carolyn)*

Romans 6:1 *What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound?*

What parent among us has ever had a teenager who continually pushed against house rules? One wonders if the young person knows too well that his (or her) parents love them and just wants to see how far they can go before they hit a limit. For example, say their curfew is 10pm, but they come home at 10:05pm, then maybe a month later it becomes 10:15pm, followed a month or two later with 10:30pm. When they are reminded of the 10pm deadline, the answer comes back, “Since when? I’ve been out later than that for the last four months!” Then a big fight erupts and the parents are accused of being unfair. When in reality, the parents were extending a bit of grace toward the teen – grace that was abused. When we continue to *deliberately* sin, even though we count on the

forgiveness of God, are we abusing His grace toward us? If we accept Jesus into our hearts, do we naturally try to emulate Christ in our daily lives? Just asking. What are your thoughts?

*Lord, what would you have me do .... always? Amen*

