

There is a passage in the Bible that tells us that if we try to understand first so that we can believe, it will never happen. But if we first believe, then we will surely understand. Well, we are called to put all our trust and faith in the Lord, even when things are bad and there seems to be no hope. The promise is made in verse 31: "And you are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, says the Lord God."

Psalm 102; Hebrews 8:1-13; Luke 10:38-42

Birthdays: Winsome Coley-Haynes, Mary Ohlrich

Anniversaries: Stephen Day & Karlette Peck,
David & Jeanne Ralicki,
Frank & Barbara Tarantino

Friday's Calendar:
7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
9:30 a.m. Life Group
10:00 a.m. Bible Study
12:00 p.m. A Way Out
8:00 p.m. AA Friday Nite Young People

Today's Ministry: Monterey Community Outreach

Saturday, May 27

Hebrews 9:1-14 *When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, he entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, through his own blood.* (vv.11-12)

In this lesson from Hebrews, we are told of the priesthood of Christ. We learn how this priesthood is different from the worship and rituals that had preceded Jesus. In the days before Christ, the priests would enter the Holy Place to offer gifts and sacrifices to atone for the sins of the people. The lesson tells us that these gifts were unable to clear the conscience of the worshiper. It was not until God sacrificed His own Son, Jesus Christ, that we were offered atonement for our sins and a certain way to enter the kingdom of God.

All we must do to obtain this grace is accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, and to live our lives in the example given us through Christ. Knowing that we are human, and that we will continue to sin, we are always given the chance to renew our commitment through the celebration of the Eucharist. Thereby, feeding on the spiritual food of his body and blood, we partake of the heavenly banquet.

Ezekiel 43:1-12; Psalms 107:33-43, 108; Luke 11:14-23

Birthdays: Rob Weidman, David Abate

Saturday's Calendar:
10:00 a.m. Bible Study ONLINE
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
8:30 p.m. Not Alone Group

Today's Ministry: Music Ministry

by *William McKee*

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"Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with Love"

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Sunday, May 21

Matthew 10:24-33, 40-42 *"What I tell you in darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops."* (v.27 NASB)

In today's Gospel, Jesus is instructing the disciples about what they have been called to do. They are told that their job is not an easy one; they will be ridiculed, persecuted, and hated. Brother will turn against brother, father against child, and child against parent, but they are to have no fear. God will provide the words that they are to say, and he who endures these trials will be given eternal life.

I believe these instructions are also given to each of us. Even though we probably do not face the corporal punishment to the extent that Christians did many years ago, we are too often reluctant to heed God's call to proclaim that we are Christians and spread His word among the people. We find that we are much more comfortable in our own little groups of close friends who believe and think as we do.

Verses 32 and 33 state it very simply and clearly: "So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven." The call is clear; is the reward worth it?

Ezekiel 3:16-27; Psalms 66, 67; Ephesians 2:1-10

Birthdays: Savannah Haynes, Angelina Vaccaro,
Isabella Vaccaro

Sunday's Calendar :

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:00 a.m. Contemporary Family Worship
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
12:00 p.m. Confirmation Class

Today's Ministry: Life Groups

Monday, May 22

Luke 9:51-62 *“Go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.”* (v.60b)

Today’s Gospel again addresses our task to spread the word of God to those who are not believers, and our reluctance to do so even though we are promised the greatest of all rewards if we will heed the call. Although this passage was written some two thousand years ago, the excuses offered sound all too familiar today. How many times are we faced with a task or chore that is either not a pleasant one or is in fact a seemingly very difficult one, and our response is, “I’ll do it, but first I want to..., I want to do it, but this is not the right time..., or I’m too busy now, but I’ll get to it...”

If we have truly accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, then the time to accept the call is now. We are to live our lives as an example of Christ and let the light shine to all with whom we come into contact in our family, our community, and the workplace. We must be willing truly to give up the urge to be in control, and give our life to Christ, not eventually, but now. Being a Christian is not an easy task for us because we will remain humans with human traits, but the message is clear, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Ezekiel 4:1-17; Psalm 89:1-18; Hebrews 6:1-12

Birthdays: Krytal Moen

Monday’s Calendar:

7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
 10:00 a.m. Praying Hands (1st & 3rd Mondays)
 3:00 p.m. Daughters of the King (2nd Mondays)
 5:45 p.m. ACOA

Today’s Ministry: Mary’s Bookstore & Library

Tuesday, May 23

Ezekiel 7:10-15, 23b-27 *Disaster will come upon disaster, and rumor will be added to rumor.* (v.26a)

I must confess that I know very little about the Old Testament other than a few Bible stories that I learned in Sunday School as a young child. In Bible studies in which I have participated, there seems to be a tendency to go to the New Testament and study the life and teachings of Jesus plus what happened to the disciples following his death. However, a portion of verse 23 seems hauntingly familiar today: “Because the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence...” I do not know how that verse could be any more appropriate than today. It seems difficult to recall a news broadcast or a newspaper story that did not begin with some story involving armed conflict or some horrible crime that man has committed against man.

I become increasingly alarmed as to what we have accepted as normal in today’s society, and the type of world that we are leaving to our children. I believe that we have been given an answer, that Christ came to save the world, and I shudder to think that in spite of all the chances we have been given we have failed completely. We must truly

begin to love and care for this beautiful world that God has given us, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Psalms 97, 99, 100; Hebrews 6:13-20; Luke 10:1-17

Birthdays: Avery Maxwell, Linda Guy

Anniversaries: Mark & Misty Broderick,
Brendan & Abigail Rogan

Tuesday’s Calendar:

7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
 9:30 a.m. Women’s Bible Study
 9:30 a.m. Life Group ONLINE
 12:10 p.m. Healing Service

Today’s Ministry: Mary’s Closet

Wednesday, May 24

Psalm 72 *He has pity on the weak and needy.* (v.13a)

There is a portion of today’s psalm that unfortunately hits home with me. “For he delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.” Too often we become what I would term comfortable Christians. We are always present at church, we give generously of our time and money, and we comfort those friends of ours during times of grief or trouble.

I do not mean to belittle this, but I believe we are called to do more than just minister to our own little group of friends. I believe we are called to humble ourselves and make ourselves vulnerable to those who are less fortunate. This means more than just writing a check or declaring that our church gives to many needy organizations. How many times have we seen a stranger at church who obviously is there in search of food or some other assistance, and we take a different path or look another way to avoid contact? I must confess that I have felt ashamed when I have done this, and then witnessed someone else go to the stranger and offer help.

We must be willing to reach out and help others. The Bible is full of stories of Jesus doing just that, yet we often do not want to take a chance or get our hands dirty. There are so many opportunities right in our own community to help those of different economic and social classes. We must let down our barriers and follow Christ’s example.

Ezekiel 11:14-25; Psalms 101, 109:1-30; Hebrews 7:1-17; Luke 10:17-24

Birthdays: Dwight Geiger, Jay Lovett,
Lily-Belle Conant, Janice Suriano,
Robert Mancuso

Anniversaries: Bill & Pate Mears

Wednesday’s Calendar:

6:30 a.m. Men’s Bible Study
 7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

10:00 a.m. Life Group
 12:00 p.m. A Priest & A Rabbi with lunch in Ross Hall
 4:30 p.m. Mary’s Kitchen
 6:00 p.m. NAMI

Today’s Ministry: Mary’s Kitchen

Thursday, May 25

Luke 10:25-37 *“You should love the Lord your God with all your heart...and your neighbor as yourself.”* (v.27)

Today’s Gospel is that familiar story of the Good Samaritan. I would guess that if there is any one Bible story that everyone is familiar with, this would be that story. Not to be redundant, but this story brings to mind many of the same feelings that I felt from yesterday’s lesson. That is, the willingness to reach out and help those who are different from us; and yes, even those who might be considered our enemies.

I believe that the conflicts in the world today stem from our unwillingness to throw away our prejudices, and accept others as children of God, and accept and love our neighbors as ourselves. We are quick to criticize those in other parts of the world, yet we refuse to acknowledge the hate and prejudice in our own community. We need to “practice what we preach” here at home.

Where I live, we have a perfect opportunity to reach out to those in the economically depressed area “across the tracks,” and show them that we do care about them, and that we do recognize them as children of God. We need to reach out and demonstrate that we want them to be neighbors and part of our community. We must take the lead in this so that our children will see our example and do likewise in the schools, and perhaps a generation will come that will not know prejudice. As Jesus said to the lawyer after telling the story, “Go and do likewise.”

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 19-32; Psalm 105:1-22; Hebrews 7:18-28

Birthdays: Georgiana Hawken, PJ Woodall

Thursday’s Calendar:

7:00 a.m. Hour of Power AA
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
 1:30 p.m. Grief Support Group
 4:30 p.m. Life Group, Smith Hall
 7:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Stepping Stones

Today’s Ministry: Intercessory Prayer Group

Friday, May 26

Ezekiel 34:17-31 *“Then they will know that I am the LORD.”* (v.27b)

Perhaps true faith is believing that something will happen when we do not have a clue as to how, why, or when it will happen. As Christians we are called to have this kind of blind faith in the Lord.

We often are taught at an early age to take action so that we can control our own destiny. Study hard so that you will be able to go to college or be independent, so you do not have to rely on others. I can remember being told that if you do not understand something, question and dig so that you can understand. Now this may indeed be suitable advice in certain circumstances; however, we are asked simply to put our trust in the Lord, that He will provide for our wants and needs.