

Friday, October 20

Matthew 11:1-6 *"The good news is preached to the poor."* (v.5c)

In school I never liked laboratory science; I never understood the material or notebooks and I hated the smells. However, I have been happily working in an experimental lab for the past ten years and loving it. Sometimes the smells are awful. At least I can understand the material. My lab is prison.

There are no test tubes. It's a spirituality lab. I prepare my experiments at home and rush to my prison lab to try them out. Then I rush home to refine my data and then back to my lab.

I am always experimenting to find ways to present Christ to the prisoners. Many are drug addicts who see and hear things far different than you or I. Some are schizophrenic, and there are murderers, thieves, and sexual deviates. The population changes rapidly, so I have to keep updating my lab notes.

Sometimes I ask the prisoners, "Where is the kingdom of God?" Other times I ask "Who is Jesus?" I get a variety of interesting answers to add to my notes. Their theology ranges from orthodox to witchcraft. Not all my attempts to reach them succeed.

At the end, however, prayer always succeeds with every man in the group who honestly turns to God. So, technically, no experiment in my spirituality lab fails.

Jeremiah 38:14-28; Psalms 16, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Birthdays: Susan Celeste, Brian Copley

Anniversary: Pat & Nancy Scully

Friday's Calendar

- 7:00 a.m. AA "Hour of Power"
- 9:00 a.m. A Way Out
- 9:30 a.m. Friday Life Group
- 10:00 a.m. Friday Bible Study
- 8:00 p.m. Friday Night Young Peoples' AA

Today's Ministry: Sunday School Teachers

Saturday, October 21

Matthew 11:7-15 *"What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see?"* (vv.7b-8a)

My Jewish doctor gave me some pills. They helped me a lot but there were unwanted side effects. He compared and contrasted my obvious earlier condition to my present, improved one. He concluded that since I made great progress with the medication, I should continue—until something new comes along!

I went away hopeful, accepting the side effects, awaiting a possible new medication being developed soon. My life has been enriched by the ageless wisdom of many Jewish advisers in business, legal, and medical situations. Classic Jewish wisdom is based on perpetual questioning, contrasting, opposing, and debating the various options and circumstances between God and man.

Nothing ever seems to end in final certainty with them. It always ends hoping for good or at least improved results in the future as they prepare for more wrestling with both God and man.

They call it wisdom. I call it prayer. I am thankful for both.
2 Kings 25:8-12, 22-26; Psalms 20, 21; 1 Corinthians 15:12-29

Birthdays: Gavin Gumbinner, Jacqueline Anson, Noah Lorr

Saturday's Calendar

- 7:00 a.m. AA "Hour of Power"
- 9:30 a.m. AA Step Study for Women
- 12:00 p.m. NarcAnon "Clean@Noon"
- 5:00 p.m. Eucharist, Rite II
- 6:30 p.m. NarcAnon "Kleen N Krazy"
- 8:30 p.m. NarcAnon "Not Alone"

Today's Ministry: Sunday Worship Assistants

by Laird Mortimer

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"Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with love"

The Clergy

The Rev. Dr. Todd L. Cederberg, *Rector* - frtodd@stmarys-stuart.org
The Rev. Christian S. Anderson, *Assistant Rector* - christian@stmarys-stuart.org
The Rev. Steve Fregeau, *Retired Assisting* - frsteve@stmarys-stuart.org

Lay Staff

Debbie Flerx, *Facilities Director* - debbie@stmarys-stuart.org
Kelly Garner, *Children's Ministry Director* - kelly@stmarys-stuart.org
Melissa Lewis, *Parish Administrator* - melissa@stmarys-stuart.org
Phillip Lindecamp, *Sexton* - phil@stmarys-stuart.org
Elise Moloney, *Office Manager* - elise@stmarys-stuart.org
Alexis Stuckey, *Youth Ministry Director* - alexis@stmarys-stuart.org
Pat Channing, *Praise Band Director* - pat@stmarys-stuart.org
Gideon Stence, *Pro Tem Choir Director*



St. Mary's Episcopal Church
623 SE Ocean Blvd. | Stuart, FL 34994
Phone (772) 287-3244 | www.stmarys-stuart.org

St. Mary's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with Love

Good News Daily

Volume XVIII October 15 - 21, 2017 Number 41

Sunday, October 15

Acts 14:8-18 *Men, why are you doing this?* (v.15a NIV)

I just attended my first stock car race. After five minutes of engines roaring, I understood the process. I spent the rest of the time searching the faces and hearts of the spectators, wondering why they came. I was searching for Jesus, too.

Why did 3,000 people pay more than \$25 each to watch cars race around a small oval track? What did they expect to see, feel, enjoy, or be thrilled by? There was little cheering and only scattered applause at the end of each race. All I saw was despair, boredom, and emptiness. Was this an escape from unfulfilled lives or dead-end jobs? What would bring new life and excitement to this crowd?

Just then, two cars crashed and careened into the center of the oval. The drivers climbed out of their wrecked cars and began a violent fistfight. The crowd came wildly alive. They screamed, cheered, and hollered. Violence aroused them.

Violence can only be overcome by the love of Jesus Christ and even though Jesus wasn't visible at that race, I know that his love will prevail over this violent world.

Jeremiah 36:1-10; Psalms 146, 147; Luke 7:36-50

Anniversaries: Vern & June Gibson, Bob & Eleanor Pearson

Sunday's Calendar

- 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I
- 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Family Worship Service
- 9:10 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
- 11:15 a.m. Coffee Hour in Smith Hall
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group
- 6:00 p.m. Alpha

Today's Ministry: Shepherd Group

Monday, October 16

Jeremiah 36:11-26 *"Yes," Baruch replied, "he dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them in ink on the scroll."* (v.18)

Danny was convicted of selling drugs and sentenced to seven years in prison. His mother's truthful, tearful testimony at the trial sealed his fate. As the guards dragged Danny from the courtroom, he shrieked at his mother, "I hope you die screaming of cancer."

With only two years left to serve, the prison chaplain placed Danny in a four-day Kairos Prison Ministry retreat to reduce his hatred. Tough, hardened prisoners learned about the Christian life, studied, sang, prayed, and enjoyed fellowship with 42 civilian volunteers.

On Saturday night a healing and forgiveness service was held. Each man wrote the names of people he hated on a piece of paper. They placed that paper in a pan of water on the altar and watched as the names disappeared. Danny listed only one name: Mother. Later that night, he wrote to his mother, told her what he just did, and asked her to forgive him. She wrote back two words; "Why now?" It was a question Danny could now answer with God's help. They wrote, phoned, prayed, and visited. When Danny's time was up, he went home to live with his mother. All things are possible with God.

Psalms 1, 2, 3; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Matthew 10:5-15

Birthdays: Barbara Hinchliffe, Carol Rohde, Kaija Mayfield, Lauren Gerbino, Nick Pasken, Laila Mayfield, Joshua Burdick, Gage Ferraro

Anniversary: Don & Barbara Davis

Monday's Calendar

7:00 a.m. AA "Hour of Power"
4:00 p.m. D.O.K. Meeting
5:30 p.m. ACA Meeting (Adult Children of Alcoholics)
6:00 p.m. Life Group

Today's Ministry: St. Mary's Closet Thrift Store

Tuesday, October 17

Matthew 10:16-23 "*When they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it.*" (v.19)

Richard, a prisoner at the jail, said, "I gotta get out of jail next Thursday, please pray for me." I cautioned him about not setting God up, and about the possibility that God may want him to say in jail longer. I prayed that Richard would open his heart to receive God. Thursday came and went. Richard was still in jail. God doesn't "gotta" answer prayers.

Many years ago my prayer life began like Richard's. However, as a sense of thankfulness to God flooded my life, I developed a second prayer posture: "Please God. Thank You God." I wanted to be sure God knew how much I appreciated His grace in the past, and I wanted Him to know I would (hopefully) anticipate showers of blessings in the (near) future.

About a decade ago, with an aging mind and body and a

heart filled with gratitude to God, I rolled into my third prayer posture: "What is Your will for me, Lord? Give me grace and strength to follow Your plan for me." The Lord sent me into the prison. Richard is still working on his "gotta" plan for God, and has spent almost 200 Thursdays in jail since we first prayed together. And I am thankful that God has revealed His will for me.

Jeremiah 36:27-37:2; Psalms 5, 6; 1 Corinthians 14:1-12

Anniversary: Jim & Jennifer Korber

Tuesday's Calendar

7:00 a.m. AA "Hour of Power"
9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study
10:00 a.m. Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Stewardship Committee Meeting
12:10 p.m. Holy Eucharist & Healing
3:00 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting
5:30 p.m. Overeaters' Anonymous Meeting
7:30 p.m. NarcAnon "Just for Today"

Today's Ministry: St. Mary's Music Series

Wednesday, October 18

Matthew 10:24-33 "*So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*" (v.31)

Self-esteem is one of the least talked about, but most vital of God's gifts. Low self-esteem leads to despair, depression, and suicide. Most prisoners, especially women, suffer low self-esteem.

The prison system wastes an average of around \$35,000 per year to lock up a prisoner, dehumanize them, and lower their already low self-esteem. Christian prison ministries do the job right for about \$100, because they bring Christ behind bars.

Over the past three years I have seen women who have committed terrible crimes experience a giant increase in self-esteem. Once they know that God forgives them and He loves them with a passion they never knew in the outside world, they become new women, and stand out in the prison population.

Even though they will never get out of prison, they have a loving attitude towards guards as well as other prisoners. They take better care of their grooming, support one another in prayer and fellowship, and stay out of trouble. They are now the "somebody" they never were in the outside world. Jesus Christ in their lives has made the difference.

Jeremiah 37:3-21; Psalm 119:1-24; 1 Corinthians 14:13-25

Birthdays: Julie Bennett, Laura Markham

Wednesday's Calendar

6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study
7:00 a.m. AA "Hour of Power"

9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
10:30 a.m. Reunion Group
1:00 p.m. Journaling 101
4:45 p.m. Mary's Kitchen
5:00 p.m. Warden's Meeting
5:30 p.m. AA "Daily Reflections"
7:00 p.m. Life Group
8:30 p.m. NarcAnon "Klean and Crazy"

Today's Ministry: Stewardship Committee

Thursday, October 19

Matthew 10:34-42 "*Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.*" (v.39)

A priest friend of mine just phoned with good news. Three years ago he was ejected, under a cloud, as the rector of a large church. His wife left him. His sons broke off contact. He was financially and spiritually bankrupt. For three years he has been under daily psychiatric care.

He has made slow, steady progress, living on his own, working in a secular job and meeting with his sons. I have prayed for him. He phoned to say the bishop is giving him a trial chance to return to ministry in a small, vacant church for the next four Sundays. It is a hurting and divided church. The former rector left under unpleasant circumstances. What a wonderful place for a wounded healer to re-enter ministry.

He will preach and pray in terms the people can understand. As he tells his story he will lose his old life by giving it away so he and the church will find new life.

Isn't this what Jesus did for us?

Jeremiah 38:1-13; Psalm 18:1-20; 1 Corinthians 14:26-33a, 37-40

Birthdays: Debra Simons, Jeff Norris

Anniversary: Rhett & Candice Keene, Victor & Joan Rivas

Thursday's Calendar

Staff Workshop
7:00 a.m. AA "Hour of Power"
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
11:30 a.m. Osceola Lunch Bunch
12:30 p.m. Overeaters' Anonymous Meeting
5:00 p.m. Stephen Leader Meeting
5:30 p.m. Qigong Class
5:30 p.m. ACA Men's Group
6:30 p.m. Life Group
7:00 p.m. AIAnon "Stepping Stones"

Today's Ministry: Sunday School
