

All Saints Church Good News Daily

Devotional readings for each day, parish birthdays and anniversaries

June 1-7, 2025

Sunday, June 1

Matthew 10:24-33, 40-42 *“Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.”* (v.31 RSV)

I can’t read these words from Jesus without thinking of a great old gospel singer (now in heaven) who used to sing “His Eye Is on the Sparrow.” Ethel Watters’ raspy voice took flight as she sang about how the Lord is always watching me.

Now that I’m older I can’t read these verses without smiling. Jesus reminds us that the Father knows how much hair we have. I don’t have as much as I used to. I’m at that stage in life where I’m glad God is watching the birds because I don’t have much time for them. My girls will soon be needing college tuition. I don’t have the energy I once had to keep up with younger colleagues at work. My mom’s health is not so good. My doctor tells me I need to have a P.S.A. test every year.

Today’s passage encourages me not to surrender to my worries. It tells me “not to fear.” And then it tells me why. I am valued by God. He loves me. At every season of life (including the unique stresses of mid-life) God is not only aware of me, He cares for me. I’m grateful for a mother who watched over me when I was a kid. I’m even more grateful for a Father in heaven who never closes His eyes (or needs bifocals).

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

Birthdays: Jeff Endean, Susan Martin, Mitchell O’Rear, Jean Pflug, Judin Thomas

Anniversaries: Fr. Stuart & Crissy Shelby

Monday, June 2

Luke 9:51-62 *Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”* (v.62)

Several weeks ago on Mother’s Day we spent time thinking about our moms and recounting special memories of when we were still at home. I wonder if our moms recalled the same memories...or different ones.

There were many times when I gave my mom cause for pause. It frustrated her to no end when I started project after project only to quit when I lost interest. What had seemed irresistibly interesting soon lost its fascination. Fortunately, I had a mom and a dad who taught me I would never succeed if I always quit.

Jesus is not interested in baptizing followers who are simply curious. Those who would shadow the Savior must be serious about his call on their life. Commitment is the currency in which disciples spend their lives. Granted, as we read Jesus’ responses to these ‘want-abecs,’ it appears at first glance that he is insensitive. Nothing could be further from the truth. (Remember the lesson of the sparrow from yesterday?)

What we are to make of these verses is the fact that there will always be reasons why we feel we cannot commit our lives fully to Christ. But, commitment demands we “fish or cut bait.” Unless he is Lord of all, he is not Lord at all.

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

Birthdays: Caroline Futch, Maddie Halligan, Rick Walters

Anniversaries: Andy & Jenny Abernathy, Dan & Caitlin Yarbrough

Tuesday, June 3

Luke 10:1-17 *And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”* (v.2)

Where our family lives in northern Illinois, cornfields are being harvested with bulldozers and land movers, not tractors and combines. The fruit of those that labor is not eating-corn or seed-corn, but condominiums and townhouses. Farmland, once plentiful in middle America, is disappearing fast.

Likewise, we live in a nation where there is an unprecedented hunger for spiritual fulfillment. While some sow wild oats, others can be seen planting “faith.” The current fascination with the supernatural is evidence that the fields around us are ripe and ready to be harvested.

As I contemplate Jesus’ challenge to his followers embarking on a short-term mission trip, I think I can hear his heartbeat. It pulsates louder and louder. Jesus’ heart is beating faster and faster. His heart beats for those who long for a relationship with him. His desire is that our hearts would beat in sync with his. Not only does he call us to reach out to the spiritually hungry around us, we are to pray that God will sensitize other Christians to help us reap.

Just like the cornfields around my home, “the fields” now ripe won’t always be farmable. Ask the Lord to show you how to “work the fields.” Friendship? Letters? An invitation to a Bible study? Reading a Christian book as a group?

Ezekiel 7:10-15, 23b-27; Psalms 97, 99, 100; Hebrews 6:13-20

Birthdays: Lucy Carney, David Colon, Tom Lawton

Anniversaries: Scott & Johanna Miller, Bob & Jane Shinn

Wednesday, June 4

Luke 10:17-24 *The seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”* (v.17)

Be honest. Would you say that joy accompanies you to work as often as your cell phone does? Is joy even on the shelf where you shop? Do you long to have more joy in your life? I do!

Happiness is (by definition) an emotional response to what happens to us. In contrast, joy is a response of our spirits to the presence of the Holy Spirit within us. When Jesus’ colleagues returned from their outreach project, they were genuinely “pumped up.” Can’t you see their broad smiles? Can’t you picture them slapping each other on the back as each pair of disciples shared the remarkable things that God had done through them?

According to verse 21, even Jesus was filled with joy. I’ll bet as he prayed to the Father his words were punctuated with laughter and peaceful sighs. But there is another reference to joy in Luke’s account. In verse 20, Jesus helps us understand how we can be joyful more than we are. He says that whereas a Christian’s joy is connected to their ministry, it is based in their identity. Apart from the thrill that comes from letting the Holy Spirit flow through us, our hearts can be content and filled with praise just knowing that we belong to God. When we remember that the One who claims us will care for us, we can face whatever “happens” with a joyful heart!

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

Birthdays: Barclay Ivanek, Ian Ravndal, Will Sims, Karen Wilkins

Thursday, June 5

Luke 10:25-37 *“But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion.”* (v.33)

Corrie ten Boom was a young Dutch woman imprisoned by the Nazis during World War II. Her heinous crime? Harboring Jews in her home. While in a concentration camp, she wondered if she could survive emotionally. Then she recalled something her father had told her when she was a child: “God never gives us our ticket until it’s time to get on the train.” She found that when she needed faith and courage, she received it in adequate supply.

I’m impressed by the phrase in Luke’s account of the Good Samaritan that says, “when he saw him he had compassion.” Not until the Samaritan traveler came upon the injured victim did he discover that compassion had been packed in his knapsack.

I’ve traveled that stretch between Jerusalem and Jericho. It’s a tricky series of switchbacks. Two thousand years later it remains a risky road. The path of Christian discipleship is dotted with risks and challenges, too. Taking our relationship with Jesus seriously includes circumstances which test our faith and our love. When we read about the hero in today’s lesson, it is fair to wonder if we would have had the courage to help (let alone have compassion—remember there was no love lost between a Samaritan and a Jew). I take comfort in taking one step at a time. Trying to guess what we’d do before we are faced with a test isn’t as accurate as looking for the ticket when we hear the train approaching.

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

Birthdays: Caroline Layson, James Chule, Nancy Hawley, Judy Johns, Kimberly Kuketz,

Rallis Smith, Buddy Smith, Bridget Story

Anniversaries: Brett & Laura Lawton

Friday, June 6

Luke 10:38-42 *“Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone.”* (v.40)

Life isn’t fair! The sooner we accept that fact, the overcast of unrealistic expectations burns off. We live in an imperfect world that is infected with a virus first discovered in a Garden a long time ago. Injustice. Imperfection. Unfairness. Those are the triplet sisters of the sin-stained human family.

Martha was upset (and rightly so). It was unfair that she be left to do all the work in the kitchen to prepare for Jesus and his friends. Her sister Mary was fully capable of lending a hand. But Martha was probably the first born and Mary most likely the last born. Each with the tendencies associated with each. Even though it would have been loving and kind for Mary to have helped Martha, Jesus affirmed Mary’s decision to lounge at his feet and listen to his words. In fact, he calls Martha to quit keeping score and pull up a chair.

In other words, in the midst of life’s unfair situations we can take comfort in “time alone with God.” There will always be work to do in the kitchen. There will always be those who should help, but don’t. Being a Christian doesn’t mean we are as considerate as we might be. But being a Christian does mean we can find understanding and hope in the One who cherishes our attention and prayer.

Ezekiel 34:17-31; Psalm 102; Hebrews 8:1-13

Birthdays: Katherine Sands

Anniversaries: Stephen & Meagan Feibelman

Saturday, June 7

Luke 11:14-23 *“When the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke and the people marveled.”* (v.14)

The first time I heard the word “dumb” used in a sentence to refer to a person, I laughed. “What do you mean that man is dumb?” I asked. “I thought you weren’t supposed to call people names!” Little did I realize that “dumb” was the correct term for someone who could not speak. I was just a kid and had much to learn about vocabulary...and life.

I had much to learn about spiritual realities as well. Not until I was a teenager with a growing understanding of what it meant to have a “personal relationship with Jesus” did I understand the consequences of being a Christian. Being assured that my sin was forgiven and that my eternal destination was assured, I found my voice. I had reason to speak out and speak up about the Lord. I wasn’t tongue-tied anymore. My mouth found motion. My lips found language. In my daily quiet time and in Sunday worship and in conversations with friends and family I could praise God and witness to His love. The demon of fear was gone.

Ezekiel 43:1-12; Psalms 107:33-43, 108; Hebrews 9:1-14

Birthdays: Peggy Ellis, Shevlin Harley, Don Tillery, Price Yarbrough

Anniversaries: David & Valerie Horvath, Lon & Roseddy Montgomery,

David & Mercy Peterson

by Greg Asimakoupoulos

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