

Devotions – August 28 – September 3, 2016

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Sunday, August 28, 2016

Text: Exodus 4:10-13

10 Moses said to the Lord, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.” 11 The Lord said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord? 12 Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.” 13 But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

There is no one less qualified to be leading this week than I am. I am not a teacher, or a preacher. I have never taken a class on theology or Greek, but when the sign-up sheet came across my path at a Synod meeting, the Holy Spirit picked up my pen and signed me up (during the week of my birthday no less). But I am very happy it did. At first, I felt like Moses thinking, “Please Lord, anyone but me.” But after a few weeks, it was wonderful to pick apart my daily verses and think to myself “could I use this in Prayfaithfully, and how?” It brought me so much deeper into the scripture than I have ever thought I could be.

So as we kick off this week, let us pray: *Awesome, awesome God, we thank you for this day and the opportunity to share your Word. As we dive deeper into scripture, we grow closer to you. Amen.*



Monday, August 29, 2016

Text: Luke 2:19

19 But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.

Today is my birthday. I once read a tip on Reddit that said something along the lines of: Always make time for your mother on your birthday. Remember, it was a big day for her too.” After having kids of my own, my eyes were open to this truth. My mother is brave and funny and wonderful; I am reminded every time I talk to her why God would trust her to raise me and take care of me.

Let us pray: *Abba Father, we thank you for our mothers. We thank you for all the women you have placed in our lives who may not be our biological mothers but motherly figures. We pray your forgiveness for when we forget about the blessings they have given us. Open our eyes to meet their needs, as they have met our needs over and over. Amen*



Tuesday, August 30, 2016

Text: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Does anyone else like when scripture sneaks up on you? It’s one of my favorite things. Recently, I was walking along the Iron Ore Heritage Trail from Negaunee to Ishpeming. I love walking this trail. There are also auxiliary trails all over that I like to explore but on this day, I kept to the trail. Closer to the end of the trail, on a small path that leads to someone’s back yard, I saw the scripture. It was a printed sign about 3 feet high that had the verse above on it. I have walked this trail many times and I don’t remember seeing it. I love this verse and I love that someone wanted to share this with strangers. I’m sure there aren’t people who appreciate it as much as I do, or people who roll their eyes at seeing it, but I’m happy that there are people who go out of their way to bless others, people who they may never meet or never know that they were even a small blessing.

Let us pray: *Heavenly Father, thank you for the blessing of your people. Thank you for all the saints who may never know the impact they have made until they see Your face. Help us all to be a blessing to others. Amen*



Wednesday, August 31, 2016

Text: John 11:38-44

38 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39 “Take away the stone,” he said. “But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.” 40 Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.” 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice,

“Lazarus, come out!” 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

I have read this passage probably fifty times. It’s one of my favorites. So often though, my mind wanders to Lazarus. Interestingly, the author decided to exclude his side of the story. I ponder what Lazarus thought of being used to bring glory to God. I’m sure he was thrilled at the honor but I also wonder if he wasn’t just a little bit sad that he was able to get a 3 day pass to Heaven, only to be brought back. Put in that position, I have no doubt I would not have handled it gracefully. Thank God that it was Lazarus.

Let us pray: *Father of truth, today we lift up our questions to You, however silly or irrelevant. We thank you for the freedom of relationship and the peace we have knowing that you delight in us, even if we question your methods. Amen*



Thursday, September 1, 2016

Text: Ephesians 3: 20-21

20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

I get hung up on this verse. I’ve heard over and over in sermons that people tend to put God in a box. Sometimes, I’m guiltier than anyone doing this, thinking that I can take care of something that only God can take care of. I’ve wasted so much time in prayer and toiling and worry on issues that are outside my control and my responsibility. I have to restart and remember that God made the whole universe and is able to do more than all we ask or imagine and I’m able to calm down.

Let us pray: *Creator God, we thank you for the peace you provide when we ask for it. We thank you for setting us free from worry. We also thank you for the grace to forgive us when we take on problems that aren’t ours to take and make a mess a disaster. Amen*



Friday, September 2, 2016

Text: Psalm 139:23-24

23 Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. 24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

So this is a very bold verse. It's honestly a little terrifying for me. I spoke with my good friend recently about this verse and confessed that I have felt the Lord calling me to do just this for a couple of months but I have been too scared to do it. I don't want to know what I am doing wrong; I don't want to feel all those feelings. Sometimes I like being lost in my ignorance. But then she said "It's going to hurt but you're missing out on blessings." Boy if that didn't hit me like a ton of bricks! After a few days of wrestling with God and many tears, now I feel so much better. I wish I hadn't waited so long.

Let us pray: *Redeeming God, thank you for sending Your Son to stand in the gap, so we may approach you with boldness. Thank you for your forgiveness and patience that for as much as we avoid you, you are always there for us. Remembering Your love for us and your care, we pray that we might not wait so long to approach you. Amen*



Saturday, September 3, 2016

Text: 2 John: 12

I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

Nothing gives me more pleasure than having coffee with a friend. For about a year, a friend of mine and I were able to meet twice a week and have coffee and fellowship and conversation. It is such a rare treat to be able to openly admit your failings and confusion to another sister/brother in Christ. She moved away about a month ago and we have been continuing our conversations digitally but it doesn't feel the same. She is going to come up for a visit in a few days and I can't wait to see her so "our joy may be complete."

Let us pray: *Dear Lord, we pray for the safe travel of loved ones during this holiday weekend. Bless us with complete joy when we connect with friends and family.*

