



LGC Daily Devotion Guide 2010

Week 30
July 25—31

I. Adoration

1. Invocation Prayer

“Lord, I sometimes wander away from you. But this is not because I am deliberately turning my back on you. It is because of the inconstancy of my mind. I weaken in my intention to give my whole soul to you. I fall back into thinking of myself as my own master. But when I wander from you, my life becomes a burden, and within me I find nothing but darkness, and wretchedness, fear and anxiety. So, I come back to you and confess that I have sinned against you. And I know you will forgive me.”
In Jesus’ Name. Amen. (*Aelred of Rievaulx* 1109-67)

2. Adoration through Psalm 30

(We’ll use this Psalm, not for today’s Bible reading, but for the sake of focusing our thoughts on God)

- Read slowly this passage at least three times and each day gather one thought about this psalm that points to God’s character and translate it into a prayer of adoration.

II. Confession

Pause now and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you your sins and ask for forgiveness.

III. Thanksgiving

List, one by one, things for which you should give thanks.

IV. Scriptural Reflection:

We shall continue the reading of the Gospel of Mark as we pursue the theme of imitating Jesus. Read slowly and reflectively the assigned passage twice at least and consider the questions below each day:

July 25 Mark 6:1-6

- (1) What were the three amazing things that the people were asking about Jesus? By their questions, what have they admitted about Jesus?
- (2) What were the counter-balancing questions they also asked about Jesus? Why would these questions appear to cancel out their previous admissions about Jesus to the point that “they took offense at him”? What were they more concerned about?
- (3) Read Jesus’ remark in v.4. Was his remark true? Would it be true today about God’s servants serving in his home church where he was brought up? What should a church be more concerned about when it comes to her teachers or leaders?
- (4) What had been the effect of their offence (and lack of faith) on Jesus’ ministry among them? (Note: the lesser extent of miracles performed was not an indication of Jesus’ power, but of the people needing miracles that came forward or brought before Him).
- (5) What is the core message to you today?

July 26 Mark 6: 7-13

- (1) What was the purpose of sending out the Twelve? Were they “qualified” to preach? How much did they know? Did it really matter?
- (2) Why did Jesus send them out in pairs?
- (3) Jesus was very specific in his instructions of “taking nothing for the journey”, as they were sent to preach. Should this principle be applied to us today?
- (4) What about the instruction to stay in one house (instead of moving around)? What was the purpose of such an instruction?

- (5) Was the shaking of dust too harsh a treatment against those who rejected them? Why or why not? What was the message here?
- (6) Can you test your memory and list the names of the Twelve disciples (see 3:16ff). Did the Twelve include Judas? How then could he also perform miracles? (See Matthew 7:22)
- (7) What is the core message to you today?

July 27 **Mark 6:14-29**

“Seldom in history can there have been such a series of matrimonial entanglements as existed in the Herod family. By (seducing and) marrying Herodias, his brother’s wife, Herod had broken the Jewish law (Lev. 18:16; 20:21) and had outraged the laws of decency and morality.” (Barclay, 150)

Herod was in essence a governor, but Caesar had bestowed the title of a king to his father, Herod the Great who slaughtered the children of Bethlehem in Matthew 2.

- (1) This section opens with three differing opinions about who Jesus was. What can you tell about the reasoning and the causes behind each of these speculations?
 - He is Elijah (see Malachi 4:5)
 - He is like one of the prophets long ago (by then the Jews had not seen a prophet for over 300 years)
 - John the Baptist (Herod’s speculation)
- (2) John’s mission was to pave the way for the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3 ff), but his mission appeared to have been cut short by his confrontation of a gentile queen, the wicked Herodias. Was it worth it? What do you think?
- (3) Mark gave a fairly detailed picture of the inner struggle of Herod. What is your verdict about him—his commendable traits and his weaknesses? What was Jesus’ verdict (see Luke 13:32 and also 23: 8-12)? What lesson can one learn from the life of Herod? (This Herod was eventually sent into exile to Gaul by Caesar)
- (4) What is the core message for you today?

July 28 **Mark 6: 30-36**

- (1) If you were one of the Twelve, describe your experience and what might you report to Jesus? What would this experience have meant to you?
- (2) What would you have expected Jesus to say in reply? What did he say in reply? Did it surprise you? Why or why not? Is this Jesus’ invitation to you today?
- (3) Would you be upset to see the crowd who did not give you a chance to rest? What was Jesus’ reaction to them? What is meant by “like sheep without a shepherd”? (See Ezekiel 34:4 concerning the duties of a shepherd.) How did Jesus shepherd them that day (v.34)?
- (4) Consider the action of the disciples: what’s wrong with their action? (a) The sending of people away? (b) Having them buy their own food—in such a late hour, and not necessarily having any money? Or, (c) telling Jesus what to do?
- (5) What have you learned about Jesus today that you should imitate?

July 29 **Mark 6: 37-44**

- (1) What might be the problem(s) of the disciples in feeding the people: (a) they did not have enough money? (b) they did not want to spend so much money? (c) it was too onerous a task for them? (d) they did not consider this as part of their ministry, or (e) they did not care about the people?
- (2) What was the message to the disciples by Jesus as he said, “You give them something to eat”? What should their reply be? What would your reply be?
- (3) In feeding the 5,000 (men), what options did Jesus have? What was the option he chose? Compare his chosen method with II Kings 4:42-44, and see the similarities and also the differences. Which of these catches your imagination?
- (4) What had this experience meant for the hungry crowd and for the disciples?
- (5) What is the most significant lesson you have learned today and how can you apply it to yourself?

July 30 **Mark 6: 45-56**

- (1) Remember the teaching and the feeding of the people happened against a background of exhaustion of the disciples and of Jesus (v.32). At the end of the day, their fatigue would only have multiplied. What did Jesus choose to do, and why?
- (2) The 4th watch was about 3-6 o'clock in the morning, a time when they desperately needed to rest. Did the storm happen by chance? Where was Jesus when the storm was taking place? What can you learn about the storm(s) in your life?
- (3) Jesus could have ordered the storm to calm at the shore, or could have sneaked into the boat before calming the storm? Why did he choose to walk towards them on the lake? Did he achieve his purpose?
- (4) The comment by Mark in v.52 links their amazement with the loaves. What impact should the experience of the loaves have on them? If it had the desired impact, how would it change their experience on the lake?
- (5) What can you learn about Jesus today?

July 31 **Mark 7:1-13**

The word *elders* does not mean, in this phrase, the officials of the synagogue; rather it means *the ancients*, the great legal experts of the old days. Their rules and traditions were oral and were eventually written down in the 3rd century after Christ, known as the *Mishnah*. These were considered to be essence of the service of God. As such, ethical religion was buried under a mass of taboos and rules.

- (1) What might be the purpose of these Pharisees and scribes coming all the way from Jerusalem to see Jesus in Galilee? From this story, what was their focus: Jesus' teaching? Jesus' miraculous power? How He conducted His life or...?
- (2) Do you think their hearts were in the right place? Why or why not? What was Jesus' verdict in vv.6-7?
- (3) What might be the rationale behind the substitution of "Corban" in lieu of looking after the parents? Try to justify

it as a Jew of the time.

- (4) Can you think of three "traditions" or "rules" in today's Bible-believing churches that resemble "Corban"? How are they being justified?
- (5) What have you learned about following Jesus today?

(1) V. **Meditative Reflection**

This week we shall continue reflecting on The Aidan Liturgy from the Northumbria Community's 'Celtic Daily Prayer.' (Permission to reprint granted).

July 25

WESTON PRIORY

Whenever we go to New England we make a point of visiting Weston Priory in the Vermont hills. The peacefulness of the place itself, the wooden chapel, the beautiful songs of the brothers at prayer ...

Peace I leave with you, My friends ...
I have called you now ...

and their involvement in the Sanctuary movement and God's heart for justice ...

Because of our belief in God as Spirit
we choose to affirm and encourage
the prophetic voices
that recognize both the sin
and the need of our time.

Because of our belief in
the Church as community
we choose to have no superiors or
inferiors among us.

We choose to be a community
that dances and sings,
in spite of the tendencies of our times
to despair and cynicism.

'Renewal of baptismal vows', Weston Priory

Be glad with dance and song,
let joy ring free:
God's love renews our hope.

Philip Franckiewicz, Weston

This renewal of hope is spoken of also in this description of life in another community.

This morning during the common prayer I suddenly became aware of the quality of my brothers and I am moved to the depths of my heart. They give their life
— all their life. They pay dearly the price of their commitment. I know that better than any. Then I can no longer say if my admiration is for my brothers or for Christ who has to set his mark on them.

Brother Roger of Taizé

July 26

TAIZÉ

Thou art the Way, none other dare I follow.

Arch R. Mggins

My failure to understand made me sad, and by way of comforting myself I read my Bible. In this way I followed the main road for five days.

The Way of a Pilgrim

Each year thousands of pilgrims make their way to Taizé in France, most of them young people, and a large proportion not Christians in any recognized sense. Their time there is carefully prescribed, but non-directive. Their own conversations, the communal prayer, and the ecumenical life of the brothers all have a profound impact.

Some people come to Taizé in a last attempt to something in the Church. Are my words going to drive them away for good, and without any hope? ...

And to find some kind of reply, I search deep within myself for some word, some image. And maybe it is I who am most surprised of all by the words I utter ...

It is the thirst that I sense in the young people on the hill. For them, as for every generation, it is strong to the point of anguish. ..

Brother Roger of Taizé

I went with the flow of the crowd. The bells started. The footsteps hastened. Outside the church various young people stood about with large signs, saying 'Silence' in a variety of languages, swinging from their necks. People gathered up worn sheets of music from a small table. In

many languages on panels outside the church there was this notice:

Be reconciled all who enter here; parents and children, husbands and wives, believers and those who cannot believe, Christians and their fellow Christians.

Jennifer Lash, On Pilgrimage

July 27

THE VIA DOLOROSA

In the middle of a busy conference in Jerusalem two of us took a short while to wander through the narrow streets of the Old City. Glancing above me I saw a Roman numeral on the wall, and realized suddenly that we were upon the Via Dolorosa, only yards from the spot where tradition has it that a woman called Veronica held out a cloth to wipe the face of Jesus as He struggled under the weight of His cross.

Look on the face of Jesus Christ, you will find it *is* still the answer; no hurt you have experienced can have taken you to the place He has not been. He has been wounded. The hurt on His face, in His eyes. The healing for you will be as you also look into His face.

Faith builds a bridge
 across the gulf of death.
Death's terror
 is the mountain faith removes.

John Bunyan

Christ of the human road,
 let us reach out to touch You,
 and, sweet Christ,
 show us Your lovely face.
As we see Your face by faith,
 we learn to become like You,
 Lord Christ,
 that the world may see Your glory.
Show us Your lovely face.

July 28

ROSLIN

In the village of Roslin in Midlothian you will eventually find the Community of Transfiguration. A condemned property with minimal facilities and an enclosure with several wooden huts, and one larger hut which serves as a chapel. It is ironically appropriate, for was it not on the mount of transfiguration that Peter wanted to build huts to remain there in the reflected glory of the face of Jesus? It is possible to visit Roslin on retreat, for a day or longer on your own in one of the huts, shut in with God and with yourself.

The things that come out of a man are they that defile him, and to get out of them a man must go into himself, be a convict, and scrub the floor of his cell.

George MacDonald

I undervalue my silence too much. Too often I move from action into silence instead of the other way about.

R. Morrison

When you come down from the mountain air, be on your guard against catching cold.

Hugh Redwood

At Roslin, the other usual visitors are wayfarers who are fed and given shelter in the house.

... thanking him for his kindly hospitality, I went on my way; where to, I did not know myself.

The Way of a Pilgrim

July 29

CLONFERT

Nearby the ancient Clonfert Cathedral, old farm-buildings have been rebuilt and new buildings erected to serve the needs of Emmanuel House of Providence. In the land where Brendan walked and prayed, the work of prayer and evangelizing goes on today. The bell above the main house, and the beautiful circular oratory, are what draw your attention. The laughter of the children and their running feet on the gravel. A car arrives with a middle-aged couple who walk to the

silent oratory, writing the name of a troubled friend in the book of prayer-intentions. A whole camp for young people or for families, a school retreat or prayer-meeting. A cross of reconciliation.

I asked Ken Wise to put into words what his visit to Clonfert had been like:

When you walked through the gates you knew you had come to a different place, a very godly place. It's not just friendliness, there's a presence there. We went not knowing what to expect. It seemed to be that God's presence was all round the place. I admit I was apprehensive, but when we got there it was totally different.

How wonderful it is to walk with God
along the road that holy men have trod.
How wonderful it is to hear Him say:
Fear not, have faith
'tis I who lead the way.

Theodore H. Kitching

July 30

LINDISFARNE
Down the wide open road
the pilgrim travels on,
his face towards the sun,
beyond the open road he
travels on.

And the waves steal the footprints
of the summer from the sand;
beneath the silver moon
the North wind blows the
fading leaves again.

Chris Simpson, 'Seasons'

And now perhaps our travels will bring us again to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne like so many, pilgrims and tourists alike. Most will venture over only between the tides when the island is an island in name only. The tide comes in and the place becomes quieter. With tourist and holiday-maker less in evidence, islander and island speak, and smile, then leave us to thoughts of our own.

It has always been that way.

Here was a sequence both of access and
inaccessibility, There were hours when the tide
closed it for prayer. `

Ronald Blythe

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
and girdled in the Saint's domain;
for, with the flow and the ebb, its style
varies from continent to isle;
dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,
the pilgrims to the shrine find way;
twice every day, the waves efface
of staves and sandalled feet the trace.

Walter Scott

July 31

LA VERNA

Never forget: 'If a man wishes to come after Me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and begin to follow in My footsteps.'

Hold Thou my feet,
let there be no returning
along the path which Thou
hast bid me tread .

Arch R. Wiggins

Francis wished with all his heart to stand beneath the cross of Christ, assuring Him of his love, that he would be there with Him, ever present on the hill of Calvary throughout the ages till the Risen Christ returned in all His glory and the cross would be no more! It was with such an intention that Francis had made his final journey to the top of La Verna, that holy mountain far to the north of Assisi. There on that mountain he had asked in fear and trembling that Christ would let him experience and share some of His sufferings on the cross. It was as if his whole life had begun and ended there. La Verna was the impossible Dream and eternal journey come true. And yet it remained

only as a memory, except for the wounds of Jesus in his feet and hands and side. And they, of course, made all the difference between the poor man who walked up the mountain and the poor man who limped down.

Murray Bodo

VI. A Time for Silence

You have mediated much today with your intellectual faculty today. Now have a moment of silence (the length is up to you, 5 or even 30 minutes), and ask God quietly, “Lord, is there any important message from you today that I might have missed? Show me, your servant is listening?”

VII. Supplication

Use the following chart to cover people and ministries that you want to remember before the Lord:

	Your family	Other people	Church Ministries	Other Ministries	City & World	Others
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wed						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

VII. Benediction

“O Lord God, who has given us the night for rest, I pray that in my sleep my soul may remain awake to you, steadfastly adhering to you love. As I lay aside my cares to relax and relieve my mind, may I not forget your infinite and unrelenting care for me. And in this way, let my conscience be at peace, so that when I rise tomorrow, I am refreshed in body, mind and soul.” In Jesus name. Amen. (*John Calvin, 1509-64*)