

Pentecost Devotional During “Social Distancing”

The following provides a daily meditation for this season of “social distancing.” As we celebrate the Season of Pentecost, may these readings draw us closer to the Spirit of the Living God, who dwells with us always. Though we worship “apart,” may we journey “together” into the new life that Christ has brought us and the Holy Spirit continually imparts to us. Now is the season for the Church to come “alive” with the Spirit’s power at home and in our daily lives.

Second Week of Pentecost

Monday, June 8

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:4-13

Reflection:

“It takes a village” – truer words were never spoken, especially when it concerns Christian community. No one has *all* the gifts – *no one* has all the ability or resources. We *need* each other. It’s not just that we all have *different* gifts, but it’s the *same* Spirit at work in each of us, providing those gifts.

During this moment when we are limited physically at how we connect, it’s so important to recognize that we need one another’s different gifts to provide for the *whole*. Some excel at communication, others are better at manual tasks, still others utilize the arts or are able to express themselves through charitable donations – *whatever* the gift, it is needed if we are to remain connected and equipped to *be* the Church.

No matter the gift or the ability, the Spirit of the LORD is behind it, revealing blessing through every single life, for the benefit of the whole world.

Prayer: *May Your Spirit be unleashed upon the world through Your Church, O LORD. May we be willing to serve as instruments of Your Kingdom. Amen.*

Tuesday, June 9

Read: Hebrews 3:1-6

Reflection:

The Bible is filled with wonderful leaders – ordinary women and men who opened themselves to God’s call and thus helped “build-up” God’s Kingdom. Moses is often the MVP of biblical heroes, and so everyone else is compared to him, much like our modern sports comparisons to

Michael Jordan or Serena Williams. However, this text makes clear that even Moses was just “a servant” (v. 5) – it was Jesus who came as “a son” (v. 6)

This is a powerful reminder that God did not extend the call for a universal savior from any mere human being, but rather, God answered the call on God’s own and *joined us* “out on the court.” It’s like the owner of a company responding to a crisis in the warehouse saying: “I didn’t make this mess, but I’ll clean it up, once and for all.”

Because God joins us in the restoration project of all creation *as* a human being, we actually are part of God’s “house,” God’s “team” in Jesus, forever. Because of Christ, every single one of us is an MVP in God’s sight. There’s no mess in this “warehouse” of earth that God is not committed to partnering with us to clean up and redeem.

Prayer: *Builder of the House, You alone are worth more than any building – help us to feel confidence in being part of Your restoration team, through Christ our brother, Amen.*

Wednesday, June 10

Read: Psalm 102:25-28

Reflection:

It’s strangely comforting to think about expiration dates: *nothing lasts forever*. That’s our hope with this virus, isn’t it? It is *not* eternal – it will *not* last forever; COVID-19 has an expiration date. The problem is, *no one* knows when that will be. On the other side of this difficult reality stands this assurance of faith: “You are the same, and your years have no end” (v. 27).

God *is* everlasting – God was in the beginning, and God will be at the end – in fact, we testify that God is *the* “beginning and the end” (Revelations 22:13). We may take comfort in God’s endurance over the tumult of creation – indeed, God has committed to triumphing over our brokenness with God’s own everlasting love.

Our God is not only the loving Creator, but also, the faithful Redeemer. And that king of faithfulness has *zero* expiration dates.

Prayer: *Thank You, LORD, that Your love will go on and on and on and on. Amen.*

Thursday, June 11

Read: Mark 7:1-13

Reflection:

In a season where our routines are for better or worse denied us, perhaps it leaves us room to analyze them more closely. Do the systems of belief or routine we uphold as “tradition” miss the

point in our relationship with God, with one another? This confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees concerned exactly that – a practice of piety that was more focused on the “self” than on one’s neighbor, and therefore, on God’s Image in “the other.”

Like the Pharisees, it’s easy for us to become so absorbed in our rituals and practices, that we stop seeing the *people* these traditions should be leading us towards. We can study Scripture all day long, but if we don’t actually *engage* these words in a way where we are showing love and justice to our neighbors, then we make “void the word of God” (v. 13).

Perhaps this season is just the time to re-evaluate our traditions to see if they are actually helping us *be* disciples and disciple one another, or if they were just “motions” we go through to validate our own sense of piety and spirituality.

Prayer: *Holy One, help me live Your Word in the way that truly honors my neighbor, and thus, honors You. Amen.*

Friday, June 12

Read: Exodus 4:27-31

Reflection:

It’s important to remember that Moses did not lead “alone” – he had his brother, Aaron, and his sister, Miriam. In fact, Moses was so terrified to actually speak to the people, God used Aaron to be Moses’ “mouthpiece” to aid him in his fear of public speech. Aaron even performs wonders like Moses to aid in gaining the support of the leaders of Israel for the upcoming deliverance from Egypt.

The Church is a community filled with Moses’, Aaron’s, and Miriam’s – we are a *family* of faith that serves together, making up for where each of us falls short. We *need* each other – because not even the Moses’ among us have “all” the gifts or personhood necessary for God’s redemption work. Without Aaron and Miriam, there would be no Exodus.

As we continue to labor “apart” during this pandemic, what are ways we can assist one another, even with physical distance? How can we help make up for one another’s shortcomings – instead of a “weakness,” maybe it’s better to think of what we lack as an opportunity for someone else to step up, *partnering* in the work of God’s Kingdom. No disciple has to be “Moses” alone. No disciple is ever *alone*.

Prayer: *Gracious God, remind me of all the siblings in faith You provide – all the different parts of Christ’s Body that make up for where I stand in need. Amen.*

Saturday, June 13

There are no texts for today. Instead, practice a true “Sabbath” and rest in the knowledge that You are loved by the God of the universe. Be true to that, and cease striving for anything else.

Prayer: *Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the Universe, for You are good, and Your steadfast love endures forever. Amen.*

Sunday, June 14 – Virtual Worship: 10:30 a.m.

Consider the guided meditation and join Pastor Jeffrey for a virtual Sunday worship:
<https://boxcast.tv/view/sunday-worship-424500> Or, use this for your own at-home worship.

Call to Worship

Leader: LORD God Almighty, You have poured out Your Spirit on all flesh to empower us to be a people for Your Kingdom, to offer lives of service and love.

All: May we hear and do what You command, that the power of darkness may be overcome by the power of Your light, through Your Spirit in Jesus’ Name. Amen.

Reflection: Matthew 9:35-10:4; Romans 5:1-5

Whether you join for virtual worship or study on your own, consider these questions:

- How might we see our vocations as “labor” for the harvest of God’s Kingdom?
- Jesus drew people to himself in order to send them out again; how do we as the Church function in this model?
- How does hope sustain us for our work in God’s harvest?

Lord’s Prayer

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name,
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Him all creatures here below; praise Him above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Blessing

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Risen One, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be and abide with you now and forever. Amen.