

CROSSWAYS

"Making Christ Visible in His Community."

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VOLUME 21, ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2015

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DOES GOD HAVE A PLAN?

I must admit that one of my pet peeves is hearing someone say, "Don't worry, God has a plan for your life and it is all working out just as God has planned it." My first reaction is skepticism, and my second is irritation. If God has a plan for my life, does that mean that I don't get to offer any input? Is my life all figured out from first breath to last and is simply playing out like a video on a DVD – unchangeable, unalterable? Where does that leave free will?

Over the years I have come to believe that the word "plan" is the sticking point. "Plan" implies for me something like a set of plans for building a house or commercial building. In construction, plans show where each room will be located, how it will be used and furnished with power, water, etc. In this way the builders know how to proceed in order to complete the structure as designed.

A human life is not built like a house or a commercial building. We are unique in every sense of the word and thus, we are less like ones who are built and more like ones who grow. A more organic model of interaction with God is more helpful and matches well with numerous parables of the Kingdom of God that Jesus offers us. We humans begin our lives as seedlings that need nurture and sustenance. We start out as "takers."

As Jesus mentions in John's gospel, our role is to "bear fruit, fruit that will last." (Jn. 15:16) Our "fruit" will be unique to the type of "tree" we happen to be. Growing from a seedling into a mature tree that is bearing fruit takes time. The seasons come and go with storms and droughts and sunlight and shade. We grow by God's grace and with the help of the Holy Spirit. And then at some point we bear fruit. That is God's plan.

So perhaps God's "plan" is more like God's "dream" for us. Just as any good parent has hopes and dreams for his/her children, so does God have a dream for each of us. And, I suspect, God's dream for us is similar to (but much better than) our own dream for our children. We dream of grown children who are capable and self-sufficient and loving. The details of where they live and what they do for a living are not nearly as important as their growth and happiness.

If God's plan is really God's dream for us, then perhaps God too gets frustrated when life throws us a curve or when failure brings us up short or when death takes a loved one away from us. Like a good parent, God would worry over us, pray for us and be present to us in those times of need and sadness, not to fix or change anything, but to simply let us know that we are not alone.

Jesus' final promise in the gospel of Matthew is not prosperity or a life free from pain and loss. Jesus' final promise is presence, "I will be with you always ..." (Mt. 28:20) God has a dream for our lives, a desire for an abundant life in Christ Jesus. In the midst of the disappointments and failures of life, may we be able to lean on God's ever-present Spirit and participate as best we can in the dream that God dreams for us.

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CHRISTIAN FORMATION

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SEPTEMBER YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAY & PLAY

Looking for a small group? Pray & Play is a small group for FAMILIES. Families who are part of Pray & Play typically meet once a month, usually the second Sunday of the month from 3-5 p.m. at a local park.

Pray & Play gives parents and children an opportunity to have fellowship and form friendships. Reasons to come:

1. By the time we go to church and Christian Formation, the children have exhausted all their good behavior and we do not stay to meet other children and parents.
2. Typically, we do not see people from other services, except for during Christian Formation.
3. Children need to burn energy, and we typically go to the park at least once a month.
4. There is no food preparation or house cleaning required – come as you are!

Pray & Play meets September 13 at Holy Cross Playground.

LORD'S RESOURCES

ADMINISTRATION, STEWARDSHIP, BUILDING & GROUNDS

SENIOR WARDEN – SHARON PUTMAN
SRWARDEN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

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BUILDING AND GROUNDS – TOM JONES
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CHANGE FOR CANGE

With your support, Women to Women presented Earl Burch, coordinator of our diocesan ministries in Cange with a check for \$5,650. If you attended Formation, you know the need is great. On August 9, we collected more than \$350 in our "Change for Cange" campaign. This is a great start for the next check for Earl. We will resume our Change for Cange campaign on the first Sunday of each month. We will also continue events as well. Thank you all for the support you have given Campaign for Cange.

~ Cathy Holford

IMMUNIZATION PROTECTS ALL OF US: DON'T WAIT. VACCINATE!

What sort of flu season is expected this year?

It's not possible to predict what this flu season will be like. Flu seasons are unpredictable in a number of ways. While flu spreads every year, the timing, severity, and length of the season varies from one year to another. Most seasonal flu activity typically occurs between October and May. Flu activity most commonly peaks in the United States between December and February.

When should I get vaccinated?

CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease. People should begin getting vaccinated soon after flu vaccine becomes available, if possible by October, to ensure that as many people as possible are protected before flu season begins. However, as long as flu viruses are circulating in the community, it's not too late to get vaccinated. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against the flu. Children aged 6 months through 8 years who need two doses of vaccine should receive the first dose as soon as possible to allow time to get the second dose before the start of flu season. The two doses should be given at least four weeks apart.

All of the 2015-2016 influenza vaccine is made to protect against the following three viruses:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus
- A/Switzerland/9715293/2013 (H3N2)-like virus
- B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus. (This is a B/Yamagata lineage virus)

The flu vaccine does not cause a person to get the flu! Since the flu vaccine is not 100% effective for every person, it is possible to get the flu despite your best efforts to prevent it.

And remember ... the flu vaccine is not the only vaccine children and ADULTS should receive. In the United States, vaccines have greatly reduced infectious diseases that once routinely killed or harmed many infants, children, and

adults. Every year, thousands of Americans still suffer serious health problems, are hospitalized, and even die from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. Protect your health and the health of your family. Make sure you and your loved ones are up-to-date on recommended vaccines.

Here's why you shouldn't wait:

- Many vaccine-preventable diseases are still common in the U.S.
- Those that are not common here are still found in other parts of the world, and can still be a threat.
- Some of these diseases are very contagious.
- Any of these diseases could be serious – even for healthy people.
- Certain people may be at higher risk for getting some diseases or having more serious illness if they were to get sick, like young children, older adults, and those with health conditions.

Vaccines are our best protection against a number of serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases. Every year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other medical experts update vaccine recommendations for children, teens, and adults based on the latest research and evidence-based science on vaccine safety, effectiveness, and patterns of vaccine-preventable diseases.

Vaccines may prevent shingles, certain types of pneumonia, tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, mumps, German measles, chicken pox, and more! You have the power to protect yourself and the ones you love. Talk to your healthcare professional about which vaccines are right for you and your family.

To learn more about vaccines and take a quick quiz to find out which vaccines you may need, visit:

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults

(Note: This article is consolidated from several articles on vaccines from the Center for Disease Control.)

~ Cindy Cain, Parish Nurse

On behalf of the Wellness Committee, there will be a Certification CPR course offered by Bon Secours St. Francis Health System at Holy Cross on Saturday, Oct. 3 at 9 a.m.

The certification will be for CPR certification/AED/adult/child/infant.

A sign-up sheet will be available mid-September in the Narthex. Stay tuned for more info!



FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

Simply Tuesday

by Emily P. Freeman

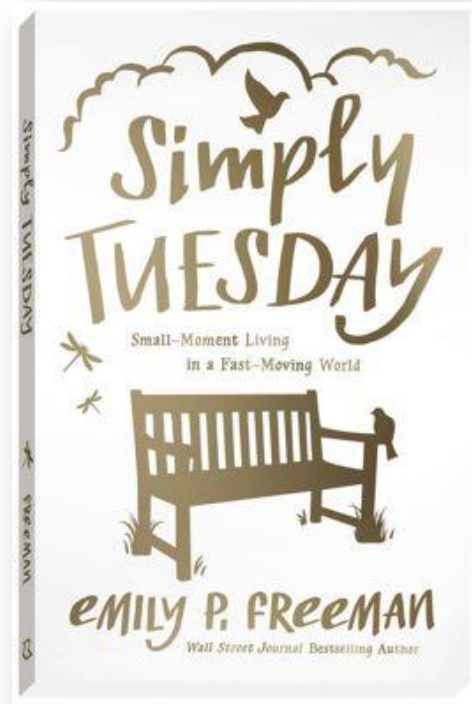
Our obsession with bigger and faster is spinning us out of control. We move through the week breathless and bustling, just trying to keep up while longing to slow down. But real life happens in the small moments, the kind we find on Tuesday, the most ordinary day of the week. Tuesday carries moments we want to hold onto – as well as ones we'd rather leave behind. It holds secrets we can't see in a hurry. It offers us a simple bench on which to sit, observe, and share our stories.

In *Simply Tuesday*, Freeman helps readers

- stop dreading small beginnings and embrace today's work
- find contentment in the now – even when the now is frustrating or discouraging
- replace competition with compassion
- learn to breathe in a breathless world

~ www.amazon.com

Send an email to kclconnor@gmail.com if you have a book, music, or movie that has been a special part of your spiritual journey.



HOLY CROSS CONTACT INFORMATION

Items for newsletter:	newsletter@holycrossep.org
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