

FEBRUARY 4, 2018
FIFTH SUNDAY
AFTER EPIPHANY



God comes with power to heal and restore.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 1:29-39	Jesus heals many people
Monday	Isaiah 40:21-31	The Lord gives strength
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 9:16-23	The rights of an apostle
Wednesday	Isaiah 35:3-10	God is coming to heal you
Thursday	Matthew 8:5-17	Jesus heals in Capernaum
Friday	Luke 6:12-19	Jesus spends a night in prayer
Saturday	Psalms 147	Praise the Lord
Sunday	Mark 9:2-9	The transfiguration of Jesus

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Even youth will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. **Isaiah 40:30-31 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear Lord, just as you give hope and renew the strength of the weary, come today and bring us your healing touch. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

The Lord sends rain to the earth and makes grass grow on the hills. Thank you, God, for giving us all we need. Amen. (Psalm 147:8)

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord renew your strength that you may rise up with wings like eagles; may you run and not be weary; may you walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:31)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

On Eagle's Wings



CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Talk about a time you have been sick, emotionally down, or simply exhausted.
- Tell about a time you were full of energy. What gave you that sense of renewed strength?
- In Isaiah 40, the people are far from home in Israel. They feel forgotten by God (Isaiah 40:27). How does God let you know you are not forgotten and how does that renew your spirit?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 1:29-39.

Jesus is having a big day. In the morning he preached and healed a man with an unclean spirit at the synagogue (vv. 21-29); in the afternoon he heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law and she immediately serves those gathered (vv. 30-31); and, in the evening he healed all who were sick or possessed with demons as "the whole city was gathered around the door" where he was (vv. 32-33). After Jesus' big day, he got up early the next morning alone and went out to a deserted place to pray. The Gospel of Mark begins with a fast start. Jesus is on the move, people come running to him, and he responds by healing all who are before him. What might Mark 1 be saying about the kingdom Jesus ushers in? What does it say to you as a follower of Jesus? After reflecting on this text, close by praying the Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE

In Mark 1:30-31, Simon Peter's mother-in-law was healed by Jesus then immediately continued her ministry of service and hospitality in her home. Serving others so they may serve is a beautiful gift of the body of Christ. Think of someone you know who could benefit from a contact to have their strength restored (Isaiah 40:31). Make a call or visit that person, listen to their story of need and care for them with the love and presence of Jesus. You may want to use portions of *Taking Faith Home* to encourage that person with God's word of promise and hope.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Christian people are praying people. There are many traditions we can introduce into our homes to remind us to pray, to offer different ways of praying, and to help make prayer a routine part of our lives. Here are some ideas to use this week: Pray in silence to meditate on God's presence and assurance (Psalm 46:10); Pray to God your disappointments (a lament prayer: see Isaiah 40:27); Pray to God a prayer of praise (Psalm 147); Pray prayers for healing (Mark 1:30-34); Pray prayers for strength and renewal (Isaiah 40:29-31); and pray for the need people have to receive the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:16-23). Have a place in your home to list these types of prayers and a place to jot down prayer requests. Display well known prayers such as the Lord's Prayer and the Peace Prayer of St. Francis.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org