

**Daily Office Devotional, Tuesday, May 4, 2021**  
**The week of the fifth Sunday of Easter**  
**The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.**

Today we celebrate the Feast of Monica. (See below.)

Daily Office Lectionary readings

AM Psalm 61, 62; PM Psalm 68:1-20(21-23)24-36

Wisdom 10:1-4(5-12)13-21; Romans 12:1-21; Luke 8:1-15

Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, Book of Common Prayer

Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, Book of Common Prayer

Compline (Night Prayer), Page 127, Book of Common Prayer

Daily Office Gospel, Luke 8:1-15

8:1 Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, 2as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

4 When a great crowd gathered and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable: 5 `A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. 6Some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered for lack of moisture. 7Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. 8Some fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold.' As he said this, he called out, `Let anyone with ears to hear listen!' 9Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant. 10He said, `To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but to others I speak in parables, so that "looking they may not perceive, and listening they may not understand." 11 `Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12The ones on the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe only for a while and in a time of testing fall away. 14As for what fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear; but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit

does not mature. <sup>15</sup>But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance.

### David's Reflections

Jesus lived a very creative and unconventional life. Three evidences of that "out-of-the-box" style appear in today's reading. First, we learn that his ministry in Galilee was peripatetic, that he traveled from place to place with his followers. Rabbis traditionally remained sedentary. They did not move about, but rather established rabbinic schools. Second, rabbis normally did not solicit their students but waited for students to come to them. Jesus called the Twelve and other followers. Third, Jesus included women among his followers, and those women traveled with his entourage and supported them financially.

(Rabbis often received financial support from women of means, but they would consider it unacceptable to have those women participate in their rabbinic ministry. For these women to be included in Jesus' traveling entourage would be most unusual.)

One can only imagine the hubbub created by these behaviors. We have ample evidence that Jesus combined in unique ways tough-mindedness and tender-heartedness. He seemed not to be dissuaded by criticism, even among his followers; yet, he had a way of remaining sensitive and caring with his harshest opponents.

What would it mean for me to live creatively and unconventionally? Priests are public figures, and just about everything they say, do, eat, drink, wear and drive draws comment and attention, as do their friendships and relationships. I have oscillated between caring too much and being too insensitive.

A verse in 2 Corinthians 3 comes to mind, "The Lord is the Spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Cor 3:17). What would it mean for you and me to be truly free, to feel unrestrained, to live outside the box and to withstand the pressures to conform while maintaining our tenderness for others? What would that look like?

There probably is only one way to find out. And, that will involve risk and error. If we were willing to listen to our most consistent yearnings, we

might hear the whisper of Jesus calling us into new and unfamiliar spaces. Will we dare live into those spaces?

"Many people fear nothing more terribly than to take a position which stands out sharply and clearly from the prevailing opinion. the tendency of most is to adopt a view that is so ambiguous that it will include everything and so popular that it will include everybody. . . . Not a few (people) men who cherish lofty and noble ideals, hide them under a bushel for fear of being called different." \*

\* Martin Luther King, "I Have a Dream": *The Quotations of Martin Luther King*, ed. Lottie Hoskins (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1968), pp. 29-30.

*Collect of the Day, Fifth Sunday of Easter*

Almighty god, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP, 225)

*Collect of the Weekdays of Easter*

Almighty God, you show the light of your truth to those who are in error, to the intent that they may return to the way of righteousness: Grant to those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to it; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Today we celebrate the Feast of Monica, mother of Augustine of Hippo (Died 387 CE).

<http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/Monica.htm>

*Collect of the Feast of Monica*

Deepen our devotion, O Lord, and use us in accordance with your will, that inspired by the example of your servant Monica, we may bring others to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, One God, forever and ever. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Peace*

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, 99)

*For the Departed*

Almighty God, we remember before you today your faithful servant N.; and we pray that, having opened to him the gates of larger life, you will receive him more and more into your joyful service, that, with all who have faithfully served you in the past, he may share in the eternal victory of Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP, 253)

*A Prayer for Light*

Grant us, Lord, the lamp of charity which never fails, that it may burn in us and shed its light on those around us, and that by its brightness we may have a vision of that holy City, where dwells the true and never-failing Light, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, 110)

*A Collect for Mission*

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, 100)