**I Love to Tell the Story**

Explore every story of Jesus in this year-long devotional guide. Go at your own pace using the online archive.

**Day 101: King Herod gets Jesus and John mixed up**

**Read: Matt 14:1-2; Mark 6:14-16; Luke 9:7-9**

Guided reflection:

Poor Herod is not sure what to think. Some people are saying that Jesus is the appearance of Elijah from the Old Testament stories but others are saying that he is John the Baptist raised from the dead!

Now, Herod has a problem with that – he had beheaded John the Baptist and if John is alive again, he figures it will be his head on a platter soon! “Who is Jesus really” is the buzz in the local diners. Even today people are asking “Who is this Jesus, really?” Think about that – what is your answer?

Guided Prayer:

*“Loving and giving God, we still ask the question of who this Jesus really is. We cannot wrap our heads around a concept of a person becoming as a child into this world to be a savior. It does not make sense that love would be behind a cross and an empty tomb. We accept your Word in faith, believing that Jesus is your precious Son, whom you sent to be the savior of the world and that includes me! Amen!”*

**Day 102: The Death of John the Baptist**

**Read: Matt 14:3-12; Mark 6:17-29**

Guided reflection:

This is the scoop on how John died – read the Mark account for full details. Sounds like something out of a current news item – doesn’t it? People are still people and folks do not like their evil deeds exposed. The worst in people usually go after someone who calls a spade a spade. Instead of owning up to things, sometimes people makes someone else out to be the bad. Herod’s angry wife got even with John the Baptist…the end result of a drunken orgy was his head on a platter. John was the one who was a gift to this world – remember Day Two of our lessons? He was the voice, calling out in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord. I think that God must cry some heavy tears over the choices people make.

Guided Prayer:

*“Our hearts are heavy, O Lord, when we read this story and know that this kind of thing goes on even today. Instead of facing our sins, we focus on others and do all we can to destroy them. Sadly, we end up destroying ourselves. Right now we pray for the innocent people who are taking the brunt of other people’s anger. Save us from ourselves… and help ME face my own issues. Amen.”*

**Day 103 : Feeding the Five Thousand**

**Read: Matt 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17**

Guided reflection:

I have always wondered about this miracle…was the miracle that the 5 loaves and 2 fishes fed 5000 people – like magic? Or, was the miracle that there was enough there when they were willing to open their pockets and share what they all had, and together they had more than enough? Either way, this points out the scarcity mentality vs abundance mentality. Scarcity says there is not enough to go

around, I must horde what I have because I might not get any more, whereas abundance flows out of a grateful and generous heart that allows little things to become much when placed in God’s hands. WOW! Do you have scarcity thinking or do you approach life with a sense of thanksgiving and generosity?

Guided prayer:

*“I want my heart to know your abundance, O God. But instead I focus on what I don’t have and become greedy and selfish; I focus on the fear that there will not be enough to go around and my fear keeps me from seeing that little becomes much when placed in your hands. Right now, create in me a heart that is filled with gratitude and open my heart to give myself away for your sake. Amen”*

**Day 104: Jesus and Peter Walk On Water**

**Read: Matt 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52**

Guided reflection:

Wow! Make sure you read the Matthew version of the story, where Peter walks on water too! Now, I have never walked on water, and I’ve never seen Jesus or Peter walk on water, I just have this story. The only thing I can relate to in this story is the fear and panic in the boat in the middle of a terrible storm. I can hold on to Jesus’ reaction: “Take heart, it is I; have no fear”. Where do you need to hear Jesus say that to your heart right now? Shhh… Listen….it is still true!

Guided prayer:

*“There is a storm in my life right now (name it). I am not sure about walking on water, but I trust that if I keep walking and trusting that I am not alone and that you are with me. Together we will make it out of the storm… Just help me to hold on to that peace in the middle of it all. Amen”*

**Day 105 : Jesus heals at Gennesaret**

**Read: Matt 14:34-36; Mark 6:53-56**

Guided reflection:

Every Sunday, in our prayer time, we read the prayer concerns on the people’s hearts who sit in the pews. Sometimes it seems so heavy to list all the folks who have just found out they have cancer, or yet another young parent has died, or a young person has been hurt. It seems the list goes on and on. Sometimes I just imagine that during our prayer time we are bringing the folks to Jesus and waiting for His touch. If you lived in these few verses, who would you bring to lie at Jesus feet? Why not bring them to Jesus right now?

Guided prayer:

*“Holy one, we do not understand why some seem to suffer so. Life does not always seem fair. Today \_\_\_\_\_ need(s) your help. (list those in need in your circle of influence) Touch them and make them whole… we leave the definition of “whole” in your hands, O God. Amen. “*