

# FAITH @ HOME

Week of July 14, 2019

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

## ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

**READ:** Luke 10:25-37

**REFLECT:** In the story that Jesus told, people respected the priest and the Levite. But many people did not like Samaritans. The Samaritans were strangers. But the Samaritan still helped the man who was hurt, even when the priest and the Levite did not. Jesus says we should be like the Samaritan. We help other people no matter who they are.

Sometimes we don't want to help other people. Maybe we're busy. Maybe we don't like the person who needs help because they've been mean to us. It's easy to help your friend, but it's not so easy to help a person who is not very nice to us or someone who is a stranger. But Jesus asks us to love and help everyone. Even people we don't like. It's not easy, but Jesus wants us to try.

**RESPOND:** Think of a time when you needed help and someone helped you. How did that make you feel? Now think of someone who you don't like very much or maybe someone who isn't treated very nicely by other people. Maybe there is someone at school. Think of a way you could help that person. How would it make you feel to help that person? Draw a picture of yourself helping another person, and ask an adult to post it on a wall or refrigerator to remind you to help others.

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: JEREMIAH SIERRA



Jeremiah is currently the communications manager for Cities of Service, a nonprofit that works to change the way local government and residents work together. He has worked for a variety of other nonprofit organizations and Episcopal churches, most recently Trinity Church Wall Street, where he was the managing editor of the quarterly magazine. He has written for *Forward Day by Day* and other publications about faith. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and three-year-old daughter.

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## ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

**READ:** Luke 10:30-33

**REFLECT:** Many of us have heard the story of the Good Samaritan. It is a wonderful tale about kindness from unexpected places. A traveler is robbed, beaten, and left for dead on the side of the road. The first two people to pass by are people that we would expect would stop—a priest and a Levite, a neighbor of this poor man. But they do not help him. Instead, the traveler receives help from a Samaritan, a man that many would consider an enemy of this traveler. The Samaritan offers compassion and mercy. But this is more than just a nice story. Jesus challenges us to think about what we would do in the same situation. Do we stop to help people in need, even if we don't like them or they have been mean to us in the past? We are often quick to help a friend, but Jesus tells us that we should respond like the Good Samaritan, treating everyone as our neighbor and loving them like we love ourselves.

**RESPOND:** This story is easy to listen to and very hard to act upon. Can you think of someone in school who might need an act of kindness? What if the classmate who always seems angry is acting that way because she feels lonely or left out? What if a student makes annoying comments in class because he is afraid others might find out that he can't read well or is struggling with math? Try this week to be like the Good Samaritan: Perform acts of kindness to everyone you meet, not just those already in your friend group. Encourage the adults in your life to do the same.

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: RICHELLE THOMPSON



Richelle Thompson lives in the beautiful bluegrass of Kentucky, near Cincinnati, with her husband, their two children, a horse, a cat, and two dogs. She serves as the deputy director and managing editor of Forward Movement, a ministry of the Episcopal Church and publisher of the daily devotional, *Forward Day by Day*.

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## ADULT AND YOUTH

**READ:** Luke 10:25-37

**REFLECT:** Today's story is one that many of us are familiar with and we hear about in both our faith communities and secular communities. It's the story of the Good Samaritan. In Luke's Gospel, this story follows Jesus' reminder of the greatest commandment: to love God with all of your heart, with all of your soul, with all of your strength and with all of your mind; and to love your neighbor as yourself. This parable of the Good Samaritan shows how easily this commandment can be overlooked as we simply walk through life.

**RESPOND:** Today's lesson invites each of us to think about who is being passed by in our society today. Who is being passed by at school? Who is being passed by in our Church in our neighborhoods? Where and how do you see the Good Samaritan, our God, showing up for them?

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: CHRISTOPHER DECATUR



Christopher is a seminarian at Virginia Theological Seminary and a postulant in The Diocese of Ohio for holy orders. Prior to seminary, Chris served at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland, OH as the Associate Minister for Children, Youth, Family, Young Adult and Campus Ministries. Chris also has served as "The Chair of The Subcommittee for Racial Reconciliation and Justice for The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music." Chris comes from an undergraduate degree in Comparative Religion from Cleveland State University and years of studies and practicing of Early Childhood Education at both CSU and as a student at The Catholic University of America. Chris is currently serving as The Outreach Coordinator for The Center for The Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminary and a Catechist for Baptized for Life: An Episcopal Discipleship Initiative.

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## ADULT AND ADULT

**READ:** Luke 10:25-37

**REFLECT:** Plumb lines give perspective. In art they are un-deviated vertical lines used as a reference when determining alignment. But in order to get perspective we have to be in perspective! Case in point: a student's perspective drawing was visually out of alignment. All three drawn objects were different sizes and looked "off." The Master Artist checked all of the planes and plum lines and then instructed the student to sit in the exact same posture for each figure and recheck all the plum lines. It became apparent to the student that the exact same posture had not been kept while drawing resulting in figures that were unaligned – or out of perspective – to each other. In art, when you're not sitting in right perspective, your drawing will be out of perspective! The same thing can happen in our spiritual lives as well. We don't stick to our spiritual practices. Maybe we got too busy and haven't made it to church for a while. Or we gradually stopped reading scripture and spending time in prayer. We might find ourselves short-tempered and not as positive in our thinking. In other words, our spiritual "posture" changes. We can feel "off" because we have gotten out of alignment with the Jesus way and pretty soon we find ourselves not in right perspective. Jesus gave us one great commandment: that we love one another the way Jesus loved us. This is the main plumb line of our faith. Not just that we love one another, but that we love one another the way Jesus loved us. When we find ourselves turning away from anyone in need, it is a sign that we are visually off and out of alignment. When this happens, we do not love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind; we do not love our neighbor as ourselves.

**RESPOND:** Check your spiritual perspective. Reflect on the posture of your practice. If you're out of perspective, admit it to yourself and to God. Then start practicing again! For guidance in developing a spiritual practice, talk to your clergy or a Spiritual Director.

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: JAN BERRY SCHROEDER



Jan works in several churches building family ministry programs. As a Shalem-trained Spiritual Director, she works with individuals and families on deepening their faith practices. As an emerging blogger, she lives beside an apple orchard with her husband and rescue dog and has discovered how apples grow – they hang!

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