

7.20.26

Week 2 Baptism: *Live a New Life*

Gathering Song [*All Things New*](#) by Big Daddy Weave

Daily Prayer *Jesus, Jesus you are with me as I step into this day.
Let me hear you gently calling, "Precious child, walk this way."
Jesus, Jesus when I hear you, calling me to follow you,
In that hour, give me grace to love my neighbor like you do. Amen.*

Scripture Romans 6:3-4 **Context:** 1-4 *Live a New Life*

...Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Devotional Thoughts *The Story of Two Neighbors and a Fence.* Once I sent out a post online asking for ideas regarding what to do about my neighbor who put up a security camera that pointed straight into our yard? There were all kinds of suggestions (some of them wild), and honestly, I was ready to march over to confront my neighbor with a shovel and my loudest voice.

But there was one piece of advice I couldn't stop thinking about: "**Ask him why.**" So I did. And y'all... he didn't even realize it was angled that way. He'd just gone through a rough time, was living alone, and wanted to feel "less boxed in, but still safe." Then he pointed to a sketch of the fence he had dreamed of making and said, "*I just want to make something beautiful.*"

That stopped me cold. Turns out he's been wanting to redo the fence for months but didn't have the time or skills to get it how he imagined. I told him kind of jokingly "*Well, I work with wood and clay. Been building furniture and sculptures for years. I've got a shop online where I sell my handmade pieces.*" He looked at me and said, "*Wait, seriously? Would you help?*"

What followed was a weirdly amazing two-week whirlwind of building, sketching, sanding, arguing about stain shades, and laughing over pizza breaks. I told him I'd add the fence to my online portfolio to help grow my shop. He agreed. And the result? What used to be a source of tension is now part of "our story". He took the camera down before I even asked. Sometimes people don't mean harm they just need connection. And sometimes fences don't have to divide. Sometimes fences make pretty great bridges.

This Week's Challenge? Have you ever looked at a situation with new eyes, seeing a person or a situation from a different perspective or through a different lens, so to speak? Look for opportunities this week to see a situation through "the other person's" eyes, and work to change how you think and feel about them. It creates empathy and compassion, as opposed to judgement.

Affirmation of Christian Vocation: **Make the sign of the cross on your forehead (or if you are doing this devotion with others, make the sign on the forehead of another) while saying...**

*All that we do belongs to God—our work and our rest.
We follow Jesus with thankful hearts and open hands, serving our neighbor in love.
Morning and evening, at work and at play, our life is in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN*