

MONDAY

Bible verses through the Gospel of John

JOHN 7:1-2 *Later Jesus was going about his business in Galilee. He didn't want to travel in Judea because the Jews there were looking for a chance to kill him. It was near the time of Tabernacles, a feast observed annually by the Jews.*

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The mockingbird has no song, at least not one of its own, when it is trying to attract a mate. A typical mockingbird repertoire includes the birdsongs of its immediate territory. The mockingbirds in St. Louis typically run through a roster of blue jay calls (the distinctive *jeer* of metal scraping, as well as its *tina bean, tina bean!* song); cardinal calls (the *chew, chew, chewie, chewie, chewie!*); house sparrows (quite literally, *chirp!*); starlings (*slurrie, slurrie*), grackles (sound of a rusty screen door shutting). But mockingbirds are unusual in the incorporation of nonavian sounds into their "song": my St. Louis birds added car alarms, brakes, car horns — in short, ambient sounds, the sounds of the world around them.
Peter O'Leary

The Mockingbird family covers a wide variety of birds including the Northern Mockingbird, the Blue Mockingbird, the Gray Catbird, and the Bahama Mockingbird. However, when most people think of a mockingbird they are thinking of the Northern Mockingbird or *mimus polyglottos*.

The translation of *mimus polyglottos* is many-tongued mimic. This is an apt description of the mockingbird since they are able to imitate many other birds. One characteristic of a mockingbird's song is that they will repeat each mimicking song three to six times. This characteristic can help distinguish whether you are listening to a mockingbird or to the bird they are imitating. *by Jennifer Flood*

Although all adult male mockingbirds sing during the day, only a bachelor sings at night. The night music that's driving you crazy is a love song. Most songbirds learn all the songs they'll ever sing before they're a year old. But the mockingbird continues to expand his collection throughout his life. He learns the songs of other birds and incorporates them into his own songs. Mockingbirds also sometimes "sing" the sounds of people whistling, frogs croaking, and doorbells ringing. *Clipmarks*

The Northern Mockingbird typically has an average of 25 and 30 songs which they sing on a regular basis. Some of these songs are mockeries of the songs sung by other birds. They are also very skilled in imitating noises, and sounds. For example, in some of the electric analysis of comparing a Mockingbird's mockery of a sound, and the original sound, it was found that at times there was not even a difference seen at all!

The mockingbird is well known for mimicking many sounds. They can sing up to about 200 songs and can make sounds like insects and amphibians. They can also imitate sounds like a barking dog, farm animals, locusts and squeaky hinges.

The Northern Mockingbird is a year round resident of Maryland. It has earned the nickname "American Nightingale" for its amazing vocal ability to imitate almost any noise or song. Many of the bird's songs are very melodious, but sometimes the non-stop all night singing in the summertime can be a bit tiring. Mockingbirds learn new songs all their lives. Males sing more than the females, with unmated males singing more than mated birds. Females will chose as their mates those males that sing the most complex, varied vocalizations. *Maryland Wild Acres, 2006 Habichat Newsletter*

HOUSTON – In an unsettling development for the natural world, a mockingbird was heard perfectly mimicking a car alarm Monday. "I heard this strange song coming from a mockingbird in a big spruce across the street from St. Luke's Hospital," bird watcher Bob Ausmus said. "After a minute or two, I realized it was one of those multi-sound car alarms—he did the staccato one, the slowly rising one, the buzzing one. He must have picked it up from one of the BMWs in the parking lot." Ornithologists predict that the alarm song will spread to millions of birds and be handed down for centuries to come.

The ONION

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If you fall for it when someone tells you to turn the pages in your Bible, to First Condominiums, chances are you simply don't read your Bible on a regular basis. *Laugh & Lift*

TUESDAY

John 7:3-5 *His brothers said, "Why don't you leave here and go up to the Feast so your disciples can get a good look at the works you do? No one who intends to be publicly known does everything behind the scenes. If you're serious about what you are doing, come out in the open and show the world." His brothers were pushing him like this because they didn't believe in him either.*

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3-year-old prayer: 'Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen.'

A little boy was overheard praying: 'Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am.' *DMX*

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Our 14 year old dog, Abbey, died last month. The day after she died, my 4 year old daughter Meredith was crying and talking about how much she missed Abbey. She asked if we could write a letter to God so that when Abbey got to heaven, God would recognize her. I told her that I thought we could so she dictated these words:

Dear God,

Will you please take care of my dog? She died yesterday and is with you in heaven. I miss her very much. I am happy that you let me have her as my dog even though she got sick.

I hope you will play with her. She likes to play with balls and to swim. I am sending a picture of her so when you see her. You will know that she is my dog. I really miss her.

Love, Meredith

We put the letter in an envelope with a picture of Abbey and Meredith and addressed it to God/Heaven. We put our return address on it. Then Meredith pasted several stamps on the front of the envelope because she said it would take lots of stamps to get the letter all the way to heaven. That afternoon she dropped it into the letter box at the post office. A few days later, she asked if God had gotten the letter yet. I told her that I thought He had.

Yesterday, there was a package wrapped in gold paper on our front porch addressed, 'To Meredith, ' in an unfamiliar hand. Meredith opened it. Inside was a book by Mr. Rogers called, 'When a Pet Dies.' Taped to the inside front cover was the letter we had written to God in its opened envelope. On the opposite page was the picture of Abbey & Meredith and this note:

Dear Meredith,

Abbey arrived safely in heaven. Having the picture was a big help. I recognized Abbey right away.

Abbey isn't sick anymore. Her spirit is here with me just like it stays in your heart. Abbey loved being your dog. Since we don't need our bodies in heaven, I don't have any pockets to keep your picture in, so I am sending it back to you in this little book for you to keep and have something to remember Abbey by.

Thank you for the beautiful letter and thank your mother for helping you write it and sending it to me. What a wonderful mother you have. I picked her especially for you.

I send my blessings every day and remember that I love you very much. By the way, I'm easy to find, I am wherever there is love.

Love, God

Author Unknown, via E-Mail Ministry

WEDNESDAY

John 7:6-8 *Jesus came back at them, "Don't crowd me. This isn't my time. It's your time—it's always your time; you have nothing to lose. The world has nothing against you, but it's up in arms against me. It's against me because I expose the evil behind its pretensions. You go ahead, go up to the Feast. Don't wait for me. I'm not ready. It's not the right time for me."*

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An old Yiddish proverb said it best -- "Small children disturb your sleep, big children your life." Writer and humorist Teresa Bloomingdale said, "If your baby's beautiful and perfect, never cries or fusses, sleeps on schedule, burps on demand, and is an angel all the time -- then you must be the grandma."

Darlene Buechel via Heartwarmers

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Challenge to Christians wanting to serve God as a volunteer! I invite every minister of small to medium size churches - and interested laypersons of faith - to consider adding a second duty to your present work, as a volunteer or paid chaplain. Now, before you begin with an excuse, I wish to reveal to you the tremendous variety of chaplaincy possibilities that actually exist:

Airport, Business, Correctional, Cruise Ships, Educational, Federal Government, Fire, Hospice, Hospital, Hotel/Resort, Industrial, Mall, Military, Motorcycle, Night Club, Nursing Home, Parachute, Police, Sea Port, Sports, Transportation, and likely many others.

These opportunities for venues where you might serve as a part or full time Chaplain are loaded with means of expanding your Christian outreach. The chances are that one or more of this type of ministry lies within an area of interest on your part.

Now, just how do you go about getting in the door of a Chaplaincy area of interest? The first step is simply going to someone 'in charge' of this activity and asking about serving with them. When you get turned down, then try, try, and try again - at intervals - until you finally get an open door.

I asked the Exec. Director of Tampa Airport in 1990 for permission to serve, but he wasn't interested. I prayed that God would either change this man's mind, or change him! A new director came on board in 1998. He invited several clergy and myself to his office to talk about opening a chapel. When that facility held a grand opening, I began an uninvited and unpaid patrolling of the employee workstations on a regular basis. And that was 12 years ago, with the chaplaincy now numbering 22 volunteer ministers, both laymen/women and ordained. I am still an unpaid volunteer, but this Chaplaincy is now firmly established and accepted. *Chaplain Shields Moore*

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26,000 cups of tea are sold daily at Heathrow Airport in London; the average 'total spend' by a passenger at the airport is £4.80 (\$9.50) – now multiply that by 70 million passengers a year.
Heathrow Airport Chaplaincy Newsletter

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During his wedding rehearsal, a groom approached the pastor with an unusual offer. "Look, I'll give you \$100 if you'll leave out the requirement of 'obedience' on my part of the wedding vows." He gave the minister the \$100 in advance and walked away satisfied. On the day of the wedding, the bride and groom have moved to that part of the ceremony where the vows are exchanged. When it came time for the groom's vows, the pastor looked the young man in the eye and said, "Will you promise to prostrate yourself before her, obey her every command and wish, serve her breakfast in bed every morning of your life, and swear eternally before God that you will not ever even look at another woman as long as you both shall live?"

The groom gulped and looked around, and said in a tiny voice, "Yes."

Then the groom leaned toward the pastor and hissed, "I thought we had a deal."
The pastor put the \$100 bill into his hand and whispered back, "She made me a better offer."
Humor Digest

THURSDAY

John 7:9-11 *He said this and stayed on in Galilee. But later, after his family had gone up to the Feast, he also went. But he kept out of the way, careful not to draw attention to himself. The Jews were already out looking for him, asking around, "Where is that man?"*

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"An asset to the team." That is how my daughter's coach described her. Madi was great behind the plate. Her arm could get the best of them out at second base. She could move from catcher to first base position with ease, and was flexible in the outfield. Yet her batting was weak and she was last on her team. Her coach's diagnosis: her bat. Madi had grown over the summer and needed a longer, heavier, stronger bat.

My husband began his research. *Best bats for girl's softball* was his Google criteria. He studied their size. He read recommendations and manufacturer's guarantees. He compared results, tests and costs. After days of investigating, he purchased the "weapon" as he called it.

The instructions said my daughter needed at least fifty good hits with that bat until she would be comfortable with the new feel. They were right; at first she didn't like it. It was uncomfortable and heavy. But she kept on using it. We played in the yard and went to batting cages. We put in the time and effort to be sure she would be well adjusted to her new equipment before she used it in a real game.

My daughter is now batting at the top of the order! Doubles, triples, even home runs are her norm. She wields that bat, smacks the ball and racks up points for her team. *Encouragement for Today, Lynn Cowell*

You need only reflect that one of the best ways to get yourself a reputation as a dangerous citizen these days is to go about repeating the very phrases which our founding fathers used in the struggle for independence. "In God we Trust." *Charles Austin Beard*

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The West Texas farmer had been taken so many times by the local car dealer that when the dealer wanted to buy a \$200 cow, the invoice offered by the farmer priced it this way:

Basic cow -----	\$200
Two-tone exterior -----	\$ 45
Extra stomach -----	\$ 75
Product storage compartment -----	\$ 60
Dispensing device, Four spigots @ \$10 ea. -----	\$ 40
Genuine cowhide upholstery -----	\$125
Dual horns -----	15
Automatic fly swatter -----	\$ 35
Total = -----	\$595

Humor

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A man went to his lawyer and stated, "I would like to make a will but I don't know exactly how to go about it."

The lawyer said, "No problem, leave it all to me."

The man looked somewhat upset as he said, "Well, I knew you were going to take the biggest slice, but I'd like to leave a little to my children, too!" *Humor*

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As an elderly lady was boarding the plane, she said to the flight attendant, "Do these things crash very often?"

The attendant replied, "No -- just once!" *Humor*

FRIDAY

John 7:12-13 *There was a lot of contentious talk about him circulating through the crowds. Some were saying, "He's a good man." But others said, "Not so. He's selling snake oil." This kind of talk went on in guarded whispers because of the intimidating Jewish leaders.*

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Diary of a Snow Shoveler: December 8: 6:00 PM. It started to snow. The first snow of the season and the wife and I took our coffee and sat for hours by the window watching the huge soft flakes drift down from heaven. It looked like a Grandma Moses Print. So romantic we felt like newlyweds again. I love snow!

December 12: The sun has melted all our lovely snow. Such a disappointment. My neighbor tells me not to worry, we'll definitely have a white Christmas. No snow on Christmas would be awful! Bob says we'll have so much snow by the end of winter, that I'll never want to see snow again. I don't think that's possible. Bob is such a nice man I'm glad he's our neighbor.

December 14: Snow lovely snow! 8" last night. The temperature dropped to -20. The cold makes everything sparkle so. The wind took my breath away, but I warmed up by shoveling the driveway And sidewalks. This is the life! The snowplow came back this afternoon and buried everything again. I didn't realize I would have to do quite this much shoveling, but I'll certainly get back in shape this way. I wish I wouldn't huff and puff so.

December 21: Called the only hardware store around to see about buying a snow blower and they're out. Might have another shipment in March. I think they're lying. Bob says I have to shovel or the city will have it done and bill me. I think he's lying.

December 22: Bob was right about a white Christmas because 13 more inches of the white crud fell today, and it's so cold it probably won't melt till August. Took me 45 minutes to get all dressed up to go out to shovel and then I had to use the bathroom. By the time I got undressed, went, and dressed again, I was too tired to shovel. Tried to hire Bob who has a plow on his truck for the rest of the winter; but he says he's too busy. I'm sure he is lying.

December 24: 6". Snow packed so hard by snowplow, I broke the shovel. Thought I was having a heart attack. If I ever catch the son of a gun who drives that snowplow, I'll drag him through the snow by his ears. I know he hides around the corner and waits for me to finish shoveling and then he comes down the street at a 100 miles an hour and throws snow all over where I've just been! Tonight the wife wanted me to sing Christmas carols with her and open our presents, but I was busy watching for that snowplow.

December 25: Merry Christmas. 20 more inches of the miserable slop tonight. Snowed in. The idea of shoveling makes my blood boil. God I hate the snow! Then the snowplow driver came by asking for a donation and I hit him over the head with my shovel. The wife says I have a bad attitude. I think she's an idiot. If I have to watch "It's a Wonderful Life" one more time, I'm going to scream!

December 26: Still snowed in. Why did I ever move here? It was all HER idea. She's really getting on my nerves.

December 27: Temperature dropped to -30 and the pipes froze .

December 28: Warmed up to above -20. Still snowed in. THE wife is driving me crazy!!!!

December 29: 10 more inches. Bob says I have to shovel the roof or it could cave in. That's the silliest thing I ever heard.
How dumb does he think I am?

December 30: Roof caved in. The snow plow driver is suing me for a million dollars. The wife went home

to her mother.

Nine more inches of snow predicted.

December 31: Set fire to what's left of the house. No more shoveling.

January 8: I feel so good. I just love those little white pills they keep giving me. Why am I tied to the bed?

Humor