

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

You can use the *Forward Day by Day* Readers' Guide in many ways: on your own to enhance your experience of the month's meditations; gather a group from your parish to explore these questions together; or join in the discussion with Forward Movement's online community by visiting us at www.ForwardMovement.org or by following us on Facebook.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

JANUARY 3: Where have you been recently and thought "Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it"?

JANUARY 7: What opportunities do you have in your life to turn a little into more than enough?

JANUARY 12: What holds you back from living a full life? How are you crippled?

JANUARY 14: Do you find yourself saying "We don't do things that way"? How might Jesus' example challenge this?

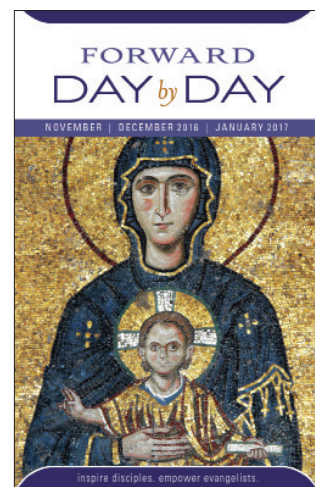
JANUARY 19: Are there situations in your life where you might be letting the kingdom of God slip through your fingers? How can you prevent this?

JANUARY 23: Are you a people-pleaser? Do you experience this as a gift or a spiritual challenge, or both?

JANUARY 30: Do you sometimes feel like your work has been wasted? What gives you the strength to go on?

ABOUT THE COVER

This mosaic of the Theotokos is found in the famous Hagia Sofia Museum in Istanbul, Turkey. In this mosaic, Mary seems a bit tired, her features a little weary but still radiant. Baby Jesus looks out wide-eyed, with a curled trinity of bangs on his forehead, perhaps reminding us of Christmas pictures with our own mothers. We see the fragments of blue, gold, and red wend their way through the lifeless stones and concrete to create whole narratives, and we are reminded of the ways God animates and activates our own dusty bodies and breathless lives in blazing colors and holy inspiration. These mosaics offer an important metaphor for our life in Christ. Each of us is a vital, vibrant individual telling the story of God through our lives and witness, and collectively we come together as part of a magnificent creation, the whole Body of Christ.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SALLIE SCHISLER is a lifelong Episcopalian and answered her calling to the ordained ministry when she was sixty. She currently serves in an historic Ohio River church among amazing people. She and her husband of forty-six years, a retired judge, are the proud parents of two grown sons, and they delight in their four marvelous grandchildren.

THE ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

At the end of every meditation in Forward Day by Day is the day's entry for the Anglican Cycle of Prayer (ACP). Maintained by the Anglican Communion Office in England, the ACP is a way to pray for every diocese and province in the Anglican Communion over a period of two years. The Anglican Communion has eighty million members in more than 160 countries—reflecting an astounding array of languages, cultures, and ministries.

Anglican Cycle of Prayer Spotlight: Forward Movement and Episcopal Relief & Development invite you to pray for our brothers and sisters throughout the world and with special intention for the Dioceses of Louisiana and Western Louisiana.

Episcopal Relief & Development is supporting the flood response activities of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana following widespread flooding over the southern part of the state. The diocese is equipping local shelters with necessary supplies and providing individual assistance for minor repairs and replacement of lost items, as well as temporary housing and temporary storage.

Five of the 20 parishes (counties) included in the federal disaster declaration are in the Diocese of Western Louisiana, and local churches are assessing and responding to immediate needs in their areas.

Although many have been able to return to their homes or secure temporary housing, approximately 2,800 people are still in shelters, down from 10,000 immediately after the storms. “All clergy have been contacted and encouraged to reach out to established Red Cross shelters,” wrote Western Louisiana Diocesan Disaster Coordinator Deacon Lois Maberry. “Several of the churches have relationships with homeless shelters [and other community ministries] and clergy have been encouraged to evaluate needs there also.”

The Diocese of Western Louisiana has urged churches to reach out and accompany impacted households in applying for FEMA assistance. Louisiana state officials say an estimated 60,000 homes were damaged by flooding across the southern part of the state, and more than 106,000 people have registered for federal disaster assistance. Please continue to pray for all those impacted by the flooding and for church communities who are reaching out to care for their most vulnerable members and neighbors.

To enable the continuing efforts of Episcopal Relief & Development to respond to the flooding in Louisiana, please donate to the US Disaster Response Fund by visiting www.episcopalrelief.org.



Photo Credit: episcopalrelief.org



We're eager to hear what you and your readers' group discover in your discussions.

Share your thoughts and insights:

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