

First Sunday in Lent, February 18, 2024

Scripture Reading: Genesis 9:8-17

If it costs your inner peace, it is too expensive. — Anon.

Once upon a time, a City Mouse from Chicago visited a cousin who lived in the neighboring state of Iowa. For lunch, the Country Mouse served wheat stalks, roots and acorns, with a dash of cold water to drink. The City Mouse ate very sparingly, nibbling a little of this and a little of that, and by her manner making it very plain that she ate the simple food only to be polite.

After the meal, the two cousins had a long talk. Actually, the City Mouse talked about her life in a huge metropolis, while her cousin, the Country Mouse, listened. They then went to bed in a cozy nest in the hedgerow and slept in quiet and comfort until morning.

In her sleep, the Country Mouse dreamed she was a City Mouse with all the luxuries and delights of city life that her cousin had described for her. So the next day, when the City Mouse asked the Country Mouse to go home with her to the city, she gladly said yes. They hopped a Union Pacific train, and off they went.

When they reached the mansion in which the City Mouse lived, they found on the table in the dining room the leavings of a very fine banquet. There were sweetmeats and jellies, pastries, delicious cheeses, indeed, the most tempting foods that a mouse can imagine.

But just as the Country Mouse was about to nibble a dainty bit of pastry, she heard a Cat mew loudly and scratch at the door. In great fear, the mice scurried to a hiding place, where they lay quite still for a long time, hardly daring to breathe. When at last they ventured back to the feast, the door opened suddenly and in came the servants to clear the table, followed by the House Dog.

The Country Mouse stopped in the other Mouse's den only long enough to pick up her carpetbag and umbrella. "You may have luxuries and dainties that I have not," she said as she hurried away, "but I'd rather gnaw a bean than be gnawed by continual fear. Truth is, I prefer my plain food and simple life in the country with the peace and security that go with it."

Yes. Who wouldn't be glad to feel secure and at peace? But it is also possible that the City Mouse also felt more secure with her life in the city. Most of us prefer the peace and security of what we call "home."

It's wonderful to have peace and security with our outer, external life. Yet, somehow, it is even better to have that peace "which surpasses all understanding, [which] will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

—Timothy Merrill, with apologies to Aesop's version of this fable, with which creative liberties were taken.

Prayer: O Lord, thank you for surrounding me with your peace. Amen.

*Blessings as we begin the season of Lent,
Lisa & Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Exodus 21-24

Monday: Exodus 25-27

Tuesday: Exodus 28-31

Wednesday: Exodus 32-34

Thursday: Exodus 35-37

Friday: Exodus 38-40

Saturday: Psalms 16-18

In Between

The object of this game is to find words that begin with the letters in the word on the left column and end with the word on the right column.

EXAMPLE:

B	BUSINESS	S
I	ICE	E
R	RIDE	E
D	DIAMOND	D

1.	A	P
	R	I
	M	T

2.	B	A
	A	C
	C	H
	K	E

3.	C	F
	A	R
	R	E
	E	E

4.	D	L
	E	I
	A	N
	D	E

5.	F	B
	I	O
	S	W
	H	L

6.	O	F
	V	L
	E	O
	R	W

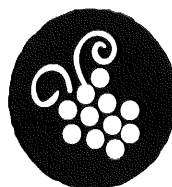
7.	G	C
	R	H
	A	I
	N	L
	D	D

8.	H	M
	O	A
	M	D
	E	E

9.	L	W
	U	A
	K	R
	E	M

10.	P	O
	A	F
	Y	F

Possible answers : 1. asleep, ravioli, mount; 2. banana, atomic, church, knee; 3. chief, affair, rinse, eve; 4. devil, eboli, adjourn, deceive; 5. flab, igloo, show, hell; 6. oaf, vernal, echo, renew; 7. graphic, ranch, alibi, naval, decided; 8. harem, opera, mild, elevate; 9. law, utopia, knitter, elm; 10. photo, aloof, yourself.



First Sunday
IN LENT