

Why me, Lord?

“Why me, Lord?” is often our prayer when bad things happen to us, whether it is a terrible thing like a diagnosis of cancer or a trivial thing like losing our keys. It reflects our belief that we are good people and that bad things should not happen to good people. It feels to us like a great universal injustice occurs when bad things happen because we simply do not deserve to have bad things happen to us.



But when we cry out “Why me, Lord?” we are really saying that we deserve nothing but all good things in our lives — that we are entitled to all that good fortune we have, so any unfortunate turn of events is unacceptable. This is what some people call a “first world problem.”

I have been reflecting on this lately and I feel that it is more appropriate to cry out “Why me, Lord?” when we receive blessings. Each time we sit down to yet another delicious meal we should cry out to the heavens “Why me, Lord? Do I deserve such a plate of food when so many go hungry?” Each time we lay down in our beds we should cry out “Why me, Lord? What have I done to deserve a warm bed and a sound roof when so many sleep in refugee camps tonight?”

In the same way when we hear the words of God’s forgiveness, we should be baffled and say “Why me, Lord? Why would Christ die for me?”

When we lay down our sense of entitlement and become more aware of the undeserved blessings in our lives, we can be more appreciative of what we have been given and more eager to share with those who are in need. Stewardship, then, could be described as knowing the difference between sharing gifts we have received and giving handouts of what is ours.

— *Pastor Mark A. Anderson*
Assistant to the Bishop

Come to the Castle

Friday, April 29
Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque

Rostered leaders and congregation members are invited to the final session of the “Come to the Castle” continuing education series at Wartburg Theological Seminary set for Friday, April 29.

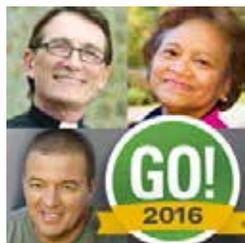
Dr. May Persaud will present “Setting Our Faces to Jerusalem: Luke & Pentecost” to rostered leaders. Congregation members can attend a Bible study on the “Book of Acts,” led by final-year seminary students.

The event runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cost to attend is \$20 per person or \$50 for a group of five. Registration is due by April 22 for the discounted rate. To learn more or to register online, visit www.wartburgseminary.edu/learningforlife/learning-for-life-events/come-to-the-castle-2.

Register early for Synod Assembly

The early-bird registration fee for the 2016 Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly is available until Tuesday, May 10. After that date, an additional \$25 fee will be added per person.

Registration materials were included in the March 2016 issue of the *Star* newsletter and can be downloaded on the synod website at www.neiasynod.org/synod-assembly.



Take health assessment by April 30 for cost savings

It’s “Go” time for the 2016 health assessment!

Take the online Mayo Clinic Health Assessment by April 30 to earn \$150 for wellness and to help this synod earn a one percent discount on ELCA health contributions. Complete follow-up activities by Nov. 30 to earn an additional \$250 in your personal wellness account.

Get started at <https://myportico.porticobenefits.org>.