

Friday, November 13, 2020

Dear Members, Friends, and Guests of Desert Hills Lutheran Church,

Welcome to Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. I've never gone in for the bad luck reputation of Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. I actually have never been too impressed with bad luck signs. I checked out Wikipedia for bad luck signs. How many have you heard?

- Breaking a mirror is said to bring seven years of bad luck
- Bird or flock going from left to right (Auspicia)(Paganism)
- Certain numbers:
  - The number 4 (tetraphobia) in Chinese culture
  - The numbers 4 and 9 in Japanese culture
  - Also in Japanese culture, maternity wards numbered 43, as it can literally mean "still birth"
  - The number 13, known as triskaidekaphobia
  - The number 17 in Italian culture
  - The number 39, known as the curse of 39, in Afghan culture
  - The number 666, known as hexakosioihexekontahexaphobia
- Friday the 13th (In Spain, Greece and Georgia: Tuesday the 13th)
- Failing to respond to a chain letter
- Giving a clock as a gift in Chinese culture, as in Chinese, to give a clock has the same pronunciation as attending their funeral<sup>[2]</sup>
- Greek Orthodox priest in the street. It is considered a bad omen to see a priest walking in the street, and superstitious people whisper "ΣΚΟΡΔΑ" (*skorda* - "garlic") under their breath.
- Hanging a horseshoe with the ends pointing down, as it is believed that the luck will 'fall out'<sup>[3]</sup>
- Opening an umbrella while indoors
- On the Isle of Man, the mention of the word "longtail" (referring to a rat)
- Ouija board<sup>[citation needed]</sup>
- Navajo:
  - pointing at a rainbow<sup>[4][5]</sup>
  - throwing rocks into the wind<sup>[4][5]</sup>
  - a coyote crossing one's path<sup>[4]</sup> heading north<sup>[5]</sup>
  - an owl flying over a house
- Placing chopsticks straight up in a bowl of rice in Chinese and Japanese culture is reminiscent of food offerings left for the dead. <sup>[6]</sup>
- Ravens, crows and magpies
- Saying the word "Macbeth" or wishing someone "Good Luck" while inside a theatre
- Shoes on a table
- Three on a match (superstition)
- Tipping a salt shaker over

- Walking under a ladder
- Black cat crossing one's path
- Laying your keys on a table according to Swedish culture

One that didn't appear was stepping on a crack will break your mother's back. I remember a time when as a little boy my mother repeatedly said no to me in a store. Out on the sidewalk I began to stomp ahead of her, hitting every crack. She survived my tantrum, one of many.

So today how does a Christian navigate Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>? We live it just like all others. We have a loving God who moves through each day with us. Each day is a gift with good things happening and bad things happening, but always we remember that our Lord Jesus is our Shepherd and we shall not be in want, regardless of the day.

This weekend we welcome some new members, wonderful people all. I will also look at Jesus' second to the last parable he told just before his crucifixion, the story of the talents. Join us in person or online and enjoy this day the Lord has made.

Blessings,

Pastor Martin