



Reflections for the
SEASON OF LENT
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE | 2020

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The Season of Lent ... is the forty-day preparatory period before Easter, beginning on Ash Wednesday. Lent begins this year on February 26 and culminates on Easter Sunday, April 12. In the Christian tradition, the season of Lent is a time of soul searching and repentance—a time for reflection while taking stock of one’s life in preparation for the Easter celebration of the risen Christ.

This booklet is a collection of Lenten Reflections from contributors throughout the Edgewood College community. Generally we have included only a portion of the biblical text due to space constraints. We hope these reflections, based on readings in the Common Christian Lectionary, serve as a guide and a point of inspiration for you during this year’s observance of Lent.

Dominican Life and Mission
Edgewood College

ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Joel 2:12-18. *Even now, says our God, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to your God. For gracious and merciful is God, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment.*

If you have not watched it yet, I highly recommend that you watch the movie *Harriet*. This film tells the story of Harriet Tubman, a woman who escaped slavery in the 1840’s and helped countless other slaves escape through the Underground Railroad. I knew the general story from history class, but the movie focused heavily on Harriet’s faith and how her relationship with God motivated her to risk her life over and over again, sustained her through severe physical and emotional abuse, and strengthened her resolve to pursue what was morally right. Reading this passage brought back my memories of this film, especially when reading the first line where God calls on us to draw out feelings of hunger and emotional pain. I was so moved by Harriet Tubman’s sacrifice in her devotion to her family and in following God’s direction to save her family and friends. As a result, she ran for days

without food, crossed rivers and swamps, and cried rivers of tears as she watched tragedy befall so many of those she loved. “Rending our hearts” is not a feeling most of us would like to experience. I think Joel’s intention is that we sacrifice the luxury of satisfying our hunger and that we feel deeply so that we are prepared to fully appreciate God’s sacrifice for us in Christ’s crucifixion. Opening our hearts to the pain also prepares our hearts for the celebration of Christ’s victory over death.

Jen Stewart
Annual Fund Gift Officer, Office for Institutional Advancement

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Deuteronomy 30: 15-20. *I have I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving your God, heeding God’s voice, and holding fast to God.*

The message in this scripture is telling us that we should be thankful to God for all that God does, and always follow the word of the Bible. Everything God has given us up until now is because God loves us. If we follow and do as it says in the Bible, God will bless us, and help us throughout the toughest of situations in life. We know that we should not serve any other god that isn’t God who gave God’s own life for us out of pure love. The reading is saying that if we love God like God loves us, then we have nothing to fear because we will be together in everlasting life, and we’ll meet God once we make it to heaven

Yahaira Figueroa
Freshman, Political Science, Spanish

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Isaiah 58: 1-9a. *Thus says our God: “This is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly...sharing your bread with the hungry...clothing the naked.”*

The prophet Isaiah emphasizes that we should always act in service to others, and should do so without the need of recognition. Penance and fasting is not about our personal suffering or what we do for ourselves, it’s about what we do in service to others. It makes me think of Facebook, Instagram and other social media outlets. When scrolling, what we see is all the good things; smiling pictures, people doing good

things. We shouldn't do things for appearances, likes or attention. We should take a minute and think about why we are posting a picture of ourselves volunteering. We should do things to help others, not because of how they make us look. How do we act when no one is looking? Appearances aren't important. What's important is the truth. It's hard to share the difficult times, the "ugly" parts of life. But that's life, that's truth.

*Maria Sierra,
Utilization and Operations Manager, Facilities. Edgewood College B.S., 2013*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Isaiah 58:9b-14. *If you call the sabbath a delight, and God's holy day honorable; if you honor it by not following your ways, seeking your own interests, or speaking with malice; then you shall delight in God.*

When I was a child, I thought of "the Sabbath" as a command(ment), something to remember and keep holy. Following this command(ment) was modeled as Sunday School and worship, and when illness kept us from attending services, we pulled a Bible and the old Lutheran hymnal from the bookshelf, sat around the piano, and had our own hour-long service. Sabbath worship was a rule I had to follow to be "good" and avoid guilt. In graduate school I was blessed to take a "Spiritually Centered Leadership" class in which Wayne Muller's Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives was a text, and I realized I'd had it all wrong. Sabbath isn't a rule; it's a gift. As God practiced self-care by resting on the seventh day, so out of immense love God urges us to set aside times of sabbath for rest and renewal. Yes, we need to work toward justice in the ways suggested earlier in Isaiah, but we also need to restore our strength. Sabbath is delight, granting us time for healing and wholeness in body and mind, renewing our courage to rise again the next day - or the next moment - and stand with others in love, working for a better world.

*Julie Luecke
Associate Professor, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, School of Education*

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 1

Matthew 4: 1-11. *At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.*

Matthew states that it was the SPIRIT who led CHRIST to the kind of temptations that He and we all face. Note that Jesus had an answer for each suggestion from the Evil One.

In reality, Christ told the TEMPTER that he (as well as ourselves) cannot

- Really satisfy our desires even though at times we try to make foolish demands of, or bargain with, God, others, and ourselves.
- Command God to do things...God lets the natural happen but promises to be with us through our life. Some things that do happen are miracles.
- Promise something the Tempter or we have no control over - certainly not over all the world and its pleasures.

At the end of the Gospel, the angels came and ministered to Jesus. Did they comfort His hunger and strengthen His desire to help all kingdoms, all peoples come closer to God? I am sure they did!

*Marha Rohde, O.P.,
Edgewood College B.S., 1969*

MONDAY, MARCH 2

Leviticus 19: 1-2, 11-18. *God said to Moses, "Speak to the whole assembly of the children of Israel and tell them: Be holy, for I, your God, am holy."*

I find God's list to Moses challenging because it limits our scope. With any list, human nature is to immediately see what's on the list and what isn't. Instead, I offer the Prayer of St. Francis to consider our relationships and society at large as a way to elevate our choices to reflect the Lord's intent for us. This prayer has always been the highest calling to me even or maybe especially in the most troublesome of times.

"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon." Open my ears to agreement, not discord; similarities before differences. Help me to produce inclusion, not exclusion, and bring forgiveness to my heart. "Grant that I may seek not so much to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand." Let me cast my own troubles aside to assist others. Grant me empathy to reach others and understand them. Guide me to act in the fullness of your love with each encounter.

*Angela Mihm Nigro
Coordinator, Doctoral Dissertation Process, Ed D Program, School of Education*

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

Isaiah 55: 10-11. *Just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth.*

Wisconsin farmers share with us a deep faith each spring when they go back to the fields, particularly in these years of heavy rainfalls, wet harvests, and slim profits. They not only feed us but in recent years go to extraordinary lengths to protect us by limiting pollution in our beautiful streams, rivers, and lakes. Farmers use winter crops to enrich the soil for spring planting. Their inventiveness turns manure into compost. Wisconsin farmers' optimism prevails despite uncontrollable factors: weather and the prices for their milk and crops. The link between the one who sows and the one who eats blurs with our busy lives in the cities and suburbs. This Lent we can plant the seeds God sends us by tapping the powerful faith of those who live for the sweet smell of fertile soil and the calming sound of lowing cows.

Ellen Foley
Adjunct Instructor, School of Business

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

Jonah 3: 1-10. *The word of God came to Jonah: "Set out for the great city of Nineveh, and announce to it the message that I will tell you."*

Imagine if you were in Jonah's sandals and God asked you to walk Monroe Street warning the people of Madison to change their evil ways or all will be destroyed. Would people listen to your message or think you were crazy? Jonah walked the streets spreading the message; Nineveh will be destroyed in forty days unless people repent for their cruel and evil behavior. The King himself bowed down to the Lord repenting and ordering everyone in the city to obey. When God saw the people change from their sinful ways God's mercy shined and God did not destroy Nineveh. This is another example of God's love for people. The sins of Nineveh were so great that God would have destroyed the city, but God didn't. As we examine our own shortcomings, remember God loves us and forgives our sins.

Jay Wilson
Shuttle Bus Driver

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

Matthew 7: 7-12. *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.*

When I was a young child, I wanted a sand-colored cocker spaniel puppy (that I would name Sandy) and asked over and over for birthdays and Christmas. But I never got Sandy. My parents provided me with everything I needed but not always what I thought I wanted. The same can be said for our petitions to God. It may seem, in fact, that we don't receive when we ask, or find something significant when we seek, and that the door seems to be stuck shut. These actions call for persistence. We should never give up asking God for what we want through prayer. We can seek through scripture God's will for our life, then knock on the door to move into the ministry that we perceive as God's will for our life. We need to be patient listening and receptive to receiving God's reply through the voices of those around us.

Eileen Donahue Brittain
Edgewood College B.A., 1970

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

Ezekiel 18: 21-28. *Thus says our God: if the wicked turn away from all the sins they committed, keeping all my statutes and doing what is right and just, they shall surely live, they shall not die. ... If the virtuous turn from the path of virtue to do evil, can they do this and still live?*

This passage reminds me of God's forgiveness and the personal responsibility that every individual has. The passage states that when one turns away from the sins they committed, they will not die but have life. All the sins that were committed are not held against the one who turns away from sin. Through this, we can see the forgiveness that God graciously gives to anyone who leaves their sinful past behind. This is an interesting point when considering the following verses which state that if one were to turn away from the virtuous path and commit evil, they will surely die. I am reminded of the personal responsibility that we have, to do what is right and just. Similar to God's grace, we should compassionately welcome those who desire a renewed life in adopting this responsibility.

Jenny Kim
Senior, Biology & Chemistry

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Matthew 5: 43-48. *Jesus said to his disciples: “You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”*

This passage is undeniably a message of loving those who we think are undeserving of it. We, like the disciples, have all been taught to think love should be reciprocated. Jesus swiftly breaks down the idea that “you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy” by asking what good that will do. Those who adore you shouldn’t hold all your attention because those who have wronged you need it more. They require more of your love because their suffering and hatred are not representative of God. God does not love those who constantly praise God more than those who never think of God. We are all God’s children no matter our wrongdoings. Therefore, those who wish to be perfect cannot only hear God’s word but must practice God’s actions. Such individuals must search for God’s wandering children and be a reflection of all that God can offer them..

Alejandra Torres
Senior, Biology

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 8

Genesis 12: 1-4a. *God said to Abram: “Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your parent’s house to a land that I will show you.”*

How do we step out from the familiar in order to be blessed?
In order to bless the world?
Not a literal world of billions
but with those you meet?
those you share a table with?
those you work with?
those you play with?
Even though it is not named in this scripture, the cause of blessing is the community of which you are a part. Becoming aware of this community may sometimes make you uncomfortable but you
Bless God by fully being with God’s people.
Bless them with your presence showing the love of God in your community.
Numbers don’t count (billions are probably beyond your reach) -
But one or two blessings (in Hebrew barucha) today will put you in a new world.

Dan Strizek
Edgewood College B.S., 1988

MONDAY, MARCH 9

Luke 6: 36-38. *Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.*

Each day we are surrounded by choices and opportunities.

We can choose to be guided by God, with the smallest of our actions having tremendous impact in bringing joy to another’s day, with the return being tenfold. We can choose to be reactionary, and it is how we react that shows true character. Or we can move through the day with little effort.

Our opportunities lie in our relationships—with God, with our families, and the paths we cross with others. I ask, why not choose joy, choose to be compassionate, choose justice for ourselves and those around us?

Life is complicated, don’t wait for things to get easier or better. We all are going to have bad days and feel the weight of the world, but it is up to each of us what we do with that day. Embrace and be conscious of our guidance from God in doing good, choose joy.

Janice DeWeese
Event and Conference Services Coordinator

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

Isaiah 1: 10, 16-20. *Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes; cease doing evil; learn to do good. Make justice your aim; redress the wronged, hear the orphans’ plea, defend the widow. Come now, let us set things right.*

Reading these verses, I find myself thinking of justice. Isaiah is telling us to be attentive to the most vulnerable of those among us, and to try to make things right for them. God’s justice is about lending a hand and our hearts to the downtrodden, to those alone or in need, and about right relationships and mercy. I do not believe this has anything to do with vengeance and retribution, as some may interpret it to be. Humble people face reality. They don’t deny their worth. They don’t put themselves down. But humble people are down-to-earth. They see themselves as good, holy, called, loved, weak, sinful, addictive, and guilty. They humble themselves. Then God, as God has promised, exalts them. May our Lenten humility lead to Easter exaltation!

Mary Sambrook.
Campus Assistance Center Supervisor

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

Jeremiah 18:18-20. *Heed me, O God, and listen to what my adversaries say. Must good be repaid with evil that they should dig a pit to take my life?*

The Scripture highlights a struggle between the differences of ideas and the struggle for power; a battle that has spanned many millennia. It has been documented and told in stories for many years across many cultures. The struggles of today seem so magnified by the constant availability of information. The divides between people grow wider more quickly. We struggle for the control of power at work, in society and at home. We desire the control of money, resources, and political stature. Let us remember that we are all God's people. As voices speaking against us get louder, we should remember to pray for kindness to everyone, not just those who see things as we do. As ideas drive us further apart, we should pray for clarity so that all sides are open to all viewpoints. Lastly, let us pray for comfort for all God's people so we can work to become closer and more accepting.

*Jacob Gill, Department Chair – Accounting, School of Business
Edgewood College B.B.A. 2010, M.S. 2012*

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

Jeremiah 17:5-10. *Blessed is the one who trusts in God, whose hope is God. That person is like a tree planted beside the waters that stretches out its roots to the stream: it fears not the heat when it comes, its leaves stay green; in the year of drought it shows no distress, but still bears fruit.*

After months of cold and dark, this part of the world eagerly awaits winter's end. Who doesn't welcome the thought of green buds, gentle breezes and free-flowing streams?

As the seasons of our lives come and go, however, we are not guaranteed idyllic conditions – in nature, the world, our relationships, academic or professional lives. Unforeseen challenges come our way. The prophet Jeremiah, naming human experience, encourages us to trust our Divine Source, to live more deeply, to reach toward what will sustain us, promising that it will make a difference.

*Mary Klink
Associate Vice President, Dominican Life and Missions*

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

Genesis 37: 3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a. *Israel loved Joseph best of all his sons, for he was the child of Israel's old age.*

Would I be like Joseph and Reuben?

1. So Joseph went after his brothers and caught up with them in Dothan." (17b) Joseph honored his father's directive even though his brothers had already left Shechem and went to Dothan. (It took longer to find them.) Joseph also knew his brothers hated him, yet Joseph loved his father and obeyed him.

2. Reuben heard of the plot to kill Joseph and said: "We must not take his life" (21b). Reuben knew it was wrong, and knew how much his father loved Joseph. This had to be extremely hard since the other brothers wanted Joseph dead. Both Joseph and Reuben loved and honored their father. Even in tough situations it is always best to love and honor my Heavenly Father. Romans 8:28: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love God."

*David Knaption
Shuttle Bus Driver*

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32. *The father said to his elder son, "My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found."*

Like the younger son, at some point in our lives, I believe each of us travels to a distant country where we become lost and feel hopeless; however, how and when we choose to leave the distant place and go back home is up to us. I believe it is important that we remember that even at our lowest points in life, we have the opportunity to acknowledge and accept our failures and head back home. Although heading back means accepting our faults and facing people we have hurt, those who truly love us will be there to forgive us and love us through our mistakes, like the father was for the younger son. As humans, we are destined to get lost in our journey through life and

travel to unknown places, but we must trust that when we are able to find ourselves and continue on our journey once more, those we love will still be there to forgive our mistakes and love us unconditionally.

Eileen McIlrot
Edgewood College B.A., 1978

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 15

Exodus 17: 3-7. *In those days, in their thirst for water, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? God said to Moses: “Go over there in front of the people, along with some of the elders of Israel, holding in your hand, as you go, the staff with which you struck the river. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock in Horeb.”*

The people were thirsty for water, an essential for life. We all thirst for something. We all ask why when hurt or maybe when we just don't understand something. Is it too much to seek answers? Like Moses we may cry out to God but, more likely, we become frustrated, anxious, depressed. God leads us together with wisdom figures (the elders) in our lives. We stand with the staff of faith and strike the rock of fear.

Marilyn Aiello, O.P.
Edgewood College B.S., 1961

MONDAY, MARCH 16

2 Kings 5: 1-15ab. *But Naaman's servants came up and reasoned with him, saying, “If the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now, since he said to you, ‘Wash and be clean,’ should you do as he said.”*

In this scripture, I can't help but compare Naaman and the servant girl. Naaman is described as a commander, valiant, respected; a leper. The servant girl captured, taken from her homeland, is a young child living in her abductor's home. Yet it is the lowly domestic who looks out for her captor, suggesting he go to Israel to be cured. It is the esteemed soldier who quickly angers when offered a simple antidote that will relieve him of his disease and ostracism. Why? What drives each to act or respond the way they do? As we walk through this Lenten season, let's examine what we think we know about ourselves, each other, and

the world around us. Let's take this time to leave our assumptions behind. Let's 'wash and be clean,' bringing new insight and truth to our relationships, our work, and our world.

Susan Roberts
Data Analyst, Academic Dean's Office

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

Matthew 18:21-35. *So will God do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother and sister from your heart.*

“...Unless each of you forgives your brother and sister from your heart.” It is not just the act of saying I forgive you, but yet the sense of peace in your heart that comes with forgiveness. All those whom I have forgiven in the past and those who I still need to forgive come to mind. Did I truly forgive them or just say the words? Did I truly believe what I was saying? During this season of penance and prayer, I think this is the time to reflect on those that need forgiving and really take in the relief in myself as I forgive them with my whole heart.

Kate Craig
Edgewood College, B.S., 2011

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9. *Moses spoke to the people and said: “Now, Israel, hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live, and may enter in and take possession of the land which the God of your ancestors is giving you. However, take care and be earnestly on your guard not to forget the things which your own eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your memory as long as you live, but teach them to your children and to your children's children.*

When contemplating Moses, I think of Obedience, Reward, and Inspiration. Moses' story, to me, is a story of an obedient servant. In these verses, he shows his steadfastness in his faith that God will provide. The greatest rewards are yet to come if the people continue to follow the path laid before them by God and obey God's command.

As a person of faith, I've been taught that I should be a disciple of God's word. Leading by example or providing inspiration to others that a plentiful life is cultivated first by a belief that God will guide and provide the right path if one follows God's law.

"Teach them," the final call to action in this excerpt, is a command that I truly take to heart. It's imperative to pass along knowledge gained to future generations to ensure continued growth, remembrance, and appreciation for all that has come before

Kristin Goosen
Enrollment Marketing Specialist

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

Matthew 1: 16, 18-21, 24a. *Joseph, Mary's husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home..." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of God had commanded him.*

Trust and faith come to mind when reading this Scripture - yet these words are not used. Joseph had the faith to trust in God to take Mary into his home knowing she carried a child that was not his. Courage also comes to mind. I wonder would I have the courage and trust and faith to do the same. Joseph was clearly righteous and had to love God to do as the Holy Spirit commanded, no matter how difficult the decision. When we are faced with struggles beyond our understanding we can turn to this Scripture. Though the decisions we face may not compare to the situation faced by Joseph and Mary, we can face those decisions with faith and trust and courage.

Michael Guns
Vice President, Business and Finance

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

Mark 12: 28-34. *And to love God with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.*

These lines brought to mind a common question in times of need: what can I do? So often we seek to do something—to give a burnt offering or offer a sacrifice in order to help. In our desire to do good we forget that we hold the power of love. We can see the evidence of love in our classrooms and offices and across campus. We can feel it in our relationships. In the season of Lent it's easy to focus on what we can sacrifice and how we can serve others. This verse serves as a reminder that at times it is not about what we can do but about the care, compassion, empathy, and love we can share with our communities. As our Edgewood community reflects on Lent, this verse calls us to recognize not only what we can give but also the strengths within ourselves.

Carly Oeding
Marriage and Family Therapy Graduate Student. Edgewood College B.S. 2019

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Luke 18: 9-14. *Two people went up to the temple area to pray...The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, "O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity — greedy, dishonest, adulterous..." But the tax collector ... beat his breast and prayed, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.*

As is the nature of most parables, the lesson resides so profoundly in the final phrase: "...for those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." My reflections were immediately drawn to our humility and maintaining a healthy perspective on our self-image and sense of importance. What came to my mind is *Unbroken*, the biography of Louis Zamperini. As an Olympic runner turned World War II bombardier, who survived an incredible 47 days in a raft in the Pacific, followed by torture at the hands of Japanese in a POW camp, Louis's incredible inner (and physical) strength and qualities saved and influenced so many lives. Yet, he remained humble and devoted throughout his life to performing God's work, including returning to Japan to forgive those who had treated him so abominably.

Humility allows us to accept our interdependence on our co-workers and to see the worth and contributions of others as we work towards the

mission of the College. I offer these words from an unknown author...
“It is far more impressive when others discover your good qualities without your help.” So, when pride and arrogance stand in our way, can we remain humble in the spotlight – whether it is before our friends, our family, our coworkers, or God?

Pamela LaValliere
Director of Human Resources

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 22

1 Samuel 16: 1b-6-7, 10-13a. *But God said to Samuel: “Do not judge from his appearance or from his lofty stature, because I have rejected him. Not as humans see does God see, because humans see the appearance but God looks into the heart.”*

While reading the passage from 1 Samuel, I was struck by the following message: “Not as humans see does God see, because humans see the appearance but God looks into the heart.” As our culture becomes ever more fixated on physical appearance and outer beauty, the reading reminds us that God looks past what is on the outside in favor of what is on the inside. God sees the inner beauty of all humans. Ultimately, we, as humans, are called to strive to see our neighbors like God does. In this season of Lent, God challenges each of us to set aside the barriers of physical appearance and embrace what each of us has to offer from the heart as God does.

Emily Rank Brunette
Edgewood College B.A., 2015

MONDAY, MARCH 23

Isaiah 65: 17-21. *Lo, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the things of the past shall not be remembered or come to mind. Instead, there shall always be rejoicing and happiness in what I create; they shall live in the houses they build, and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant. For I create Jerusalem to be a joy and its people to be a delight.*

Home

Look around

Who is here to join hands

To generate joy

In healing our relationship with Nature
In linking our Hearts together
In living our deepest Purpose
To generate joy for self and others
Each day

Stephan Hiroshi Gilchrist, Director and Faculty
Social Innovation and Sustainability Leadership Graduate Program

TUESDAY, MARCH 24

Ezekiel 47: 1-9, 12. *The angel brought me, Ezekiel, back to the entrance of the temple of God, and I saw water flowing out.*

When reading this passage, the symbol of water shines through. The water trickles, flows, empties, travels, makes fresh, brings life, brings health, and brings bounty. To me, water represents the spirit of God. Our belief may start as a constant trickle, but the further it goes the fuller it grows – just like how our faith and grace grow and deepen as we mature and follow our spiritual journeys. The river water touches everything in its path and brings leaves that shall not fade, bountiful fruit, medicine, and fresh water. Similarly, God’s spirit touches every aspect of our life and brings forth positive impact and blessings to others.

April Yerges
Assistant Professor, Henry Predolin School of Nursing

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

Luke 1: 26-38. *The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High...” But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.”*

Our text for today reminds us, once again, that God breaks into our world through ordinary people charged with extraordinary missions. Mary’s reaction of “How can this be?” echoes that of her ancestors, from the dumbfounded Abraham and Sarah to a stunned Moses at the burning

bush. She foreshadows the response of Saul, turned into Paul after a blinding revelation on the road to Damascus. I think we can all see ourselves posing the same question.

For me, this text is a call to remember to stop, look and listen. God is at work in our world, and usually it is in the most unexpected ways and places, and carried by the most unlikely messengers. What have I missed, because I wasn't listening? Who have I dismissed, because they didn't look like my idea of God's representative?

Today, take time to stop, look and listen for the extraordinary carried by the ordinary.

Christine Melland

Instructional Designer and Online Faculty. Development Specialist; Edgewood College M.A., 2015

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

Exodus 32: 7-14. *God said to Moses, "I see how stiff-necked this people is. Let me alone, then, that my wrath may blaze up against them to consume them. Then I will make of you a great nation." But Moses implored God, saying, "Let your blazing wrath die down; relent in punishing your people. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and how you swore to them, 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky.'" So God relented.*

When I read this passage, my first instinct was to question why a loving God would threaten to destroy people. But in many ways, this passage is not about God's anger; it's about Moses' plea. It would have been far easier for Moses to fuel the fires of righteous anger than to ask God to relent. After all, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and they've thanked him by turning their backs on everything he's done. However, Moses does not throw his people under the bus. Instead, he calls God out. He asks for love and understanding instead of condemnation, and thus saves everyone. How powerful a force is Moses' compassion, that it can override anger, hurt, humiliation, and recognize the shared divine heritage of his people? In the moments when God similarly tests us: how can we choose to react like Moses?

*Mikayla Mrochek, Dominican Life Program Coordinator
Edgewood College B.A., 2018*

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

Psalm 34: 17-21, 23. *God is close to the brokenhearted; and those who are crushed in spirit God saves.*

What really resonates with me when reading this passage is that no matter what, God is there for us. God's love is limitless and has no restrictions. There is nothing we have to do to have God's love but accept it. God does not judge us or belittle our faults; God accepts them and is there to help make us a better person if we accept God's love. No matter what we are going through or how far we have fallen off the path, God will always welcome us back with open arms. I think it's important for us to remember no matter how bad things seem or how far we have slipped, God is always waiting to welcome us back. Ready to help us find our way back on God's path, ready to redeem us, and ready to help us live a happy and whole life in God's love

Justin Meyer,

Head Men's Basketball Coach/Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance. Edgewood College B.S., 2004

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Psalm 7:2-3, 9bc-12. *My God, in you I take refuge; save me from all my pursuers and rescue me, lest I become like the lion's prey, to be torn to pieces, with no one to rescue me.*

Keeping faith in God through the darkest of times is difficult, but in this passage, we are reminded by David how important faith is. In our times of need, when we are grappling with the trials and tribulations of life; God is there to help us. God will be our refuge. God will be our shield. God will save us even when all seems lost.

Even David's faith in God waxed and waned. This can be seen when we compare his feeling in Psalm 7 to those found in Psalm 22, where he first says a phrase that will later be uttered by Jesus on the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).

As difficult as it will be, it is important that we always remember that we can make it through any challenge as long as we have faith in God.

Matthew Gilliam

Enrollment Data Processor, Admissions Office

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 29

Ezekiel 37: 12-14. *O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, ... I will put my spirit in you that you may live.*

We are midway in our Lenten journey and already we are hearing of resurrection! The prophet Ezekiel is sharing a very personal mystical experience that seems to inform and energize his preaching ministry. His message, one of Promise of “new life,” will soon be experienced by the remnant who have for too long been wandering in Exile. A chosen people whose hope, much like their surroundings, had long dried up. Their wandering has left them lifeless and discouraged. Ezekiel proclaims that God has not forgotten them. God has always been with them. God’s promise is one of LIFE. God will give them a new Spirit breathing into them God’s own breath. What God promises, God does.

As we journey this Lenten season we might ask ourselves; “Where is our Hope? Is it easier to wander or to open ourselves to the breath of God with us, within us, surrounding us?”

Maggie Hopkins, O.P.

Assistant to the President, Dominican Catholic Identity

MONDAY, MARCH 30

John 8: 1-11. *Jesus said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She replied, “No one, sir.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more.”*

For the woman caught in adultery execution is imminent. Jesus shows “mercy” on her, and in so doing calls into sharp question the culturally operative understanding of “justice.” This mercy of Jesus is not so much a setting aside of the claims of justice as it is a challenge to short-sighted understandings of justice itself—understandings that precipitate condemnation which brings deadly consequences in its wake. The mercy of Jesus is a sign pointing toward a deeper, richer, more multidimensional understanding of justice – justice as God sees it, and as we are beckoned to embody it. Would-be stone throwers ... are sharply required to confront the prospect that mercy at the hands of Jesus (who gets his hands dirty on behalf of the woman) – is a sign of God’s own judgment about the nature of true justice into which all of us need to journey, a journey that has “life and death” ramifications.

David J. Schlafer, "Hearing John in Lent" pp. 7-8

Journal for Preachers, vol. XLIII, No. 2, Lent 2020

TUESDAY, MARCH 31

Psalm 102: 2-3, 16-21. *O God, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you. Hide not your face from me in the day of my distress. Incline your ear to me; in the day when I call, answer me speedily.*

This passage makes me go back to remember that I am where I am today because of God's mercy and unconditional love. There are times in which I forget to pray or even read the scripture; however, God has never forgotten about me. There has been no time in which God has not answered my prayers, there has been no time in which God has stopped listening to me. God has never despised my prayer. On the other hand, God has always guided me and protected me. God is loving and compassionate. The Lord always forgives us no matter how bad our sin is, that is what makes God different. God loves us all in the most wonderful way we could ever imagine. Sometimes we forget that our God is always there, present. God is always waiting to hear your cry and praise. Do not ever forget that no matter how hard your problems might seem, your God will never leave you alone. On the other hand, God is holding your hand and teaching you a new life experience. Hold on to God and you will never fall.

Jahdai Guerrero

Sophomore, Psychology/Clinical Counseling Concentration

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95. *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent an angel to deliver the servants who trusted in God; they disobeyed the royal command and yielded their bodies rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.*

According to the United Nations, 65,550 children were separated from their parents along our southern border in 2019, in many cases without a tracking system, and despite US authorities admitting potential for long-term or permanent physical and emotional damage to those involved. Yet some people adore golden idols, turning a blind eye to the impact of misguided priorities, or fear and lack of understanding of other people’s lives. Standing up for God’s commands can place us at odds with family, colleagues, political affiliations. Only some – like

the brave young men and their mother in this Scripture reading - risk alienation from their peers. They demonstrate, call legislators, demand change to embrace the love God has for every person, trusting and enacting God's teachings and promises.

Beatriz E. Aguilar
Professor and Chair, Music Department

THURSDAY, APRIL 2

Psalm 105:4-9. *Look to God, God's strength; seek to serve God constantly. Recall the wondrous deeds that God has wrought.*

As I mull over this passage, it is the concept of service that resonates most profoundly with me, particularly "seek to serve God constantly." It is easy in turbulent times to become focused on worldly things— from daily worries like paying bills, to larger political issues splashed over the headlines every day. These things press on all of us and can distract from the idea of service to others. However, this psalm reminds me that I need to look to God. One central way to do that is by serving others. Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are actually created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which means that the entire purpose in my life is really to serve others. It's not surprising then, that being useful to someone else, thinking first about others rather than ones' own circumstances, is ultimately the key to a more fulfilling, happy life.

Michael Vining
Assistant Registrar, Registrar's Office

FRIDAY, APRIL 3

Jeremiah 20:10-13. *I hear the whisperings of many: "Terror on every side! Denounce! let us denounce him!" All those who were my friends are on the watch for any misstep of mine.*

This passage brings to mind the current political and social tensions in our country. Neighbors, friends, and family are divided by differing political beliefs. We view the world from our individual perspectives and it is difficult to see through other lenses. This makes the divide between "sides" seem larger and impossible to bridge. Rather than falling prey to thoughts of vengeance, I try to take positive action by

embracing the Dominican values, especially when I feel my efforts are futile. When mistreated by others, remain confident in yourself. Look to the value of Truth to help you remain firm as you seek a fair resolution. Rather than seeking vengeance, seek healing. Look to Compassion and Community to help bridge the gaps created by differences of belief, knowing that some differences stem from fear and ignorance rather than hatred. Look to Partnership as you support those who are being condemned. It is through those positive actions that we may attain the Justice we are seeking for all members of our community.

Trish Tegen
Assistant Dean for Academic Operations, Academic Dean's Office

SATURDAY, APRIL 4

Ezekiel 37:21-28. *I will make them one nation upon the land, in the mountains of Israel, and there shall be one prince for them all. Never again shall they be two nations, and never again shall they be divided into two kingdoms.*

These words remind me of the importance of UNITY and the sense of security I can find in COMMUNITY. I find strength in UNITY but am also reminded of my real responsibility for others in community. These words deliver an expectation that we are accountable for the well-being of one another. This passage reminds us that God intends to UNITE us and would have us view the world from a we paradigm as opposed to an us vs. them dichotomy. We are reminded to act in our daily lives to conquer divisiveness and unify to work towards the common good.

Amber Schultz
Vice President of Enrollment Management

HOLY WEEK – PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 5

Isaiah 50:4-7. *God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning God opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back.*

God opens my ear so I may hear. As a wife, mother, sister, friend, educator, provider of health care, **listening to really hear** in the day-to-day conversations is difficult. It is so easy to speak as if we know how someone should solve their problem or that our past experiences will serve

as their answer. In this passage I believe God has asked that we quiet the temptation to speak and really listen to those that have entrusted us to be a part of their life. God also asks that we spend time daily reflecting/hearing the lessons in the scripture so we may become strong servants of God's words. If we quiet our voices and open our hearts to really spend the time to listen to those in need, God's lessons will become the solver of the problems and worries to all those that pass through our lives.

Tina DeGroot

Assistant Professor, Henry Predolin School of Nursing

HOLY WEEK – MONDAY, APRIL 6

Isaiah 42:1-7. *Thus says our God...who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spreads out the earth with its crops, who gives breath to its people and spirit to those who walk on it: I have called you for the victory of justice; I formed you, and set you as a covenant of the people, a light for the nations.*

As I read this scripture text, I reflect on everything that God provides us that we sometimes take for granted. Isaiah lists “spreading the earth with crops,” and giving breath to people and providing the spirit to empower us to act upon the needs of all. When Isaiah mentions prisoners and those who live in darkness, it reminds us that God is always welcoming new followers and cares greatly about us. At the beginning of the text, Isaiah makes it clear that God keeps loving us each and every day and will keep trying every day to establish justice on earth. God also provides us with the spirit to do the same.

Let's use this as a reminder to be inclusive and supportive of each other not just in our Edgewood Community, but the greater world, just as God is every day.

Matt Held

Sophomore, Computer Information Systems

HOLY WEEK – TUESDAY, APRIL 7

Isaiah 49:1-6. *Though I thought I had toiled in vain, and for nothing, uselessly, spent my strength, yet my reward is with God, my recompense is with my God.*

There may have been moments when people thought that Jesus's work in this world and His sacrifices were for naught as He was nailed to the cross. We, too, may have moments when we feel like our time and efforts are not valued or appreciated. Was our work on a project done in vain? Was the time we spent helping someone wasted if they didn't express gratitude in the way we had hoped? These thoughts may cross our minds. Hopefully, if we make choices about how we live our lives and the way we spend our time that are consistent with our core values, we will live each day knowing that our lives and actions matter.

Sara Liang (Friar)

Co-Director, Center for Global Education. Director, Study Abroad & International Student Services. Edgewood College B.A., 2003; Ed.D. 2016

HOLY WEEK - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

Matthew 26:14-25. *The teacher says, “My appointed time draws near; in your house I shall celebrate the Passover with my disciples.”*

Even during the lead up to his imminent death, Jesus was teaching. In service to others, while his closest comrades were lacking loyalty, Jesus remained steadfast in his love for his Disciples.

During Lent, this passage inspires reflections about the opportunity we have to live with love, acceptance, forgiveness, even when we know those among us might not share the same loyalties.

The passage is a poignant reminder that our time on earth is limited, and a life well lived is to be “true to thyself,” consistent in loving yourself, and others.

Jesus was a teacher by example. Teaching methods did not criticize others. Simply, Jesus would let his actions speak louder than words.

During Lent, I find myself wanting to follow the leadership example of Jesus when confronted with challenges or adversity, “How can I be in service to others with kind, compassionate, empathetic actions?”

Michael Meissen

Associate Director of Clinical Experiences, School of Education

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 9

John 13:1-15. *If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.*

On the evening of the last supper, before he was put to death, Jesus began washing the feet of his disciples, who were puzzled and confused by this. Earlier in the passage, Jesus said to the disciple Peter: "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later." Jesus had a history of radical behavior that indeed confounded many of the people he encountered in his short life. This particular act of humility and caring communicated: "I am not too proud or disdainful to kneel before you and wash your feet. Do not consider yourself better than others; allow others to minister to you in the same way you minister to them." Our ability to clearly discern the message behind a particular act or event may take time. Accept the mystery; remain open to what may be revealed in the fullness of time.

Becky Rice

Administrative Assistant (retired). Dominican Life; School of Arts and Sciences

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 10

Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9. *We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace, to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.*

Both strong-willed, my mother and I met at another crossroad. I missed the bus to a forensics competition and instead of driving to the event, I came home. I came home because it was made clear I was not to drive any further than to where I would board the bus.

From my teenager perspective, I made the right choice. I was adhering to my parents' instruction, foregoing the opportunity to share my speaking abilities in presenting a piece I invested time and energy to perfect. My mother likely agreed, but was focused on the reason why I missed the bus.

With mom standing at the house's front door and me sitting in the car, I watched as dad walked up the hill. He opened the car door, took a seat, looked at me and said, 'now tell me what happened.' I did as we drove to the competition.

The patience shown me that day, a willingness to listen, to understand, to accept me as I continued to blunder through those last years at home, are what we can ask of the Son of God. And ask so confidently, knowing he will show us both his grace and mercy.

Kathy Buechel

Human Resources Specialist – Benefits. Human Resources Office

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 11

Psalms 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12-14, 24, 35. *You water the mountains from your palace; the earth is replete with the fruit of your works. You raise grass for the cattle, and vegetation for people's use, producing bread from the earth. How manifold are your works, O God!*

This psalm gives us space to reflect on the magnificent gift that God has given us of our home planet Earth and reminds us to give thanks for this treasure. From the bounty of the Earth, we are provided water to drink, food to eat, materials to build shelter, and everything else needed to sustain life. The scripture reminds us to give thanks to God for providing us with all these resources, but what resonated the most with me, is the importance of us being good stewards of the Earth. Today, more than ever, due to the impacts of climate change, the planet seems in a precarious place; a place where if we don't make significant changes, we may damage the Earth forevermore. This could be a moment in human history where we stand united, as one people in this world to protect our shared home and its finite resources. I hope this Easter we can think about how we can put aside our differences to make positive changes to protect the Earth for future generations.

Jessica Heckman

Lecturer, Biological Sciences

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 12

Matthew 28:1-10. *After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake...Then the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples."*

Matthew's telling of Mary Magdalene's encounter at the tomb contains elements unique to Matthew such as the earthquake and the descent of an angel. Each of the four canonical gospels tells the story and each has its own uniqueness and beauty. One thing each gospel has in common is the centrality of Mary Magdalene to the story. Add to these four stories the teachings found within the Lost Gospels of Nag Hammadi, found in 1945, and those of the Gospel of Mary Magdalene found in 1896, and Mary Magdalene is recovered as the confidant and companion of Jesus, a teacher and mystic, the 13th apostle and wisdom leader. We have much to learn from a fresh encounter of Jesus with Mary Magdalene at the tomb!

Larry Engel
Adjunct Professor, Religious Studies

We are so glad you have taken this Lenten journey with us into a landscape of reflection, thoughtful study, and action on behalf of others. Some have likened the spiritual journey to an ascent toward a mountain top whose lower geography is replete with valleys, forests, rugged terrain, rushing streams, deep rivers, and uneven, sometimes barely discernible pathways. This journey, the journey of life, is one we share together. God touches each one of our lives and encourages us toward the ascent. We hope these reflections and the community we share together encourage you further on.

Thank you to all who have contributed reflections for this Season of Lent.

We welcome your feedback. Please email jmaglior@edgewood.edu.

DOMINICAN LIFE AND MISSION

Edgewood College

Coordinator, Reflections for the Season of Lent 2020: Mary Klink
Layout: Rebecca Rice, Rae Senarighi

*Reflections available during Lent
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1000 Edgewood College Drive
Madison, WI 53711-1997

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