



Reflections for the
SEASON OF LENT

EDGEWOOD COLLEGE | 2019

Blessings to you ... and your family during this holy season as Christians throughout the world prepare for Easter through prayerful listening to God's Word, openness to God's mercy, and compassionate outreach to needs within the human family.

This booklet is a collection of Lenten Reflections from contributors throughout the Edgewood College community. Each day's reflection includes a brief biblical text drawn from daily Lent Scripture readings selected for the Common Christian Lectionary. We hope these reflections provide inspiration for you during this year's observance of Lent.

Warm personal regards,

Scott Flanagan
President

Mary Klink
Associate Vice President for Dominican Life & Mission

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Ash Wednesday, March 6

Joel 2: 12-18. Even now, says 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.

This passage is called by many the call to repentance. On this day, the start of the holy season of Lent, it is important that each person pause to look back and reflect on the thoughts and actions of time passed. Allow themselves the opportunity to feel the collision of pain caused by negative words, ideas, and deeds with the strong desire for goodness that God asks of every person. In this reflection, be honest about the feelings and emotions that accompany the thought. Honesty with one's self allows for openness to God.

Repentance does not mean pain and sorrow alone. Repentance also brings joy; for repentance is a commitment to change for the future. This commitment is to the prospect of being a better person for one's self, their community, and most importantly God. As a person builds a more honest relationship with themselves, they build a closer relationship to God and can provide truth, compassion, and justice to a world desperate for repentance.

*Jacob Gill '10, MS '12
Chair, Accounting Department, School of Business*

Thursday, March 7

Deuteronomy 30: 15-20. Today I have set before you life and prosperity, death and doom... Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving God, heeding God's voice, and holding fast to God.

In this passage, Moses makes his final appeal to the people of Israel as they prepare to enter the promised land. Moses offers the community words of encouragement and caution as he implores them to remember the laws passed down to him from Mount Sinai. Having assured the people of Israel that they are capable of doing what God commands (30:11 – 14), he presents them, the community, with a choice: life and good or death and evil (30:15).

Moses goes on to artfully describe a picture of shalom for the community. He describes the promised land as a shared blessing for the community of Israel. Shalom, as it relates to community, may be understood as a wholeness and healing – a flourishing community. This wholeness, gifted to all of us through the grace of God, leads to community outcomes of exuberant abundance and wellbeing for all. Moses does not mince words. This passage offers a blunt urgency and is echoed again in the New Testament: the choice for a community restored to wholeness – shalom - is ours to make. The message is as relevant now as it was when Moses first shared it.

Carrie Sanders

Director of Community Engagement and Impact, School of Integrative Studies

Friday, March 8

Isaiah 58: 1-9a. This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own. Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed.

In today's world of rapid change, social media, and access to instant information, it is easy for us to get caught up in a lot of stuff that isn't really important. Especially during holiday seasons, it is easy for us to simply "go through the motions" based on traditions that we were raised to believe. However, this scripture was a reminder to me of the unconditional love that God shares for all human beings. I feel as if this is also a reminder that we must be patient and remain focused on our purpose in life. For us to live out God's message, we must remember the intent behind our actions, let our moral compass lead us, and live authentically, rather than seeking ways for us to prove our worth and commitment to God in artificial ways. We must simply trust the process, guided by our faith.

Pat Estes, M.S. '15

Assessment Research Analyst, Institutional Assessment & Research Office

Saturday, March 9

Isaiah 58:9b-14. If you remove from your midst oppression, false accusation and malicious speech; if you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday; then God will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land.

This scripture passage is a powerful guide for our moral compass as a society and as individuals who should each contribute meaningfully to the community in our own ways, if living our lives mindfully. Another translation of the second half of verse 12 reads “...you will be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the streets in which to dwell.” When life is lived with kindness and a dedication to restoring the social and spiritual truth, we can light any dark path ahead, guiding both ourselves and countless others in a safe direction. This passage is a reaffirmation of the justice sought by our many altruistic actions and it is a directive to take this kindness even further in our every thought and deed.

Carolyn Field

Associate Professor, Sociology

First Sunday in Lent, March 10

Luke 4: 1-13. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days...

This first Sunday of Lent, I am drawn to reflect on ways I have experienced being filled with the Spirit. It is a good place to start for this Lenten season, to pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit so that we can be guided by that Spirit in this time of repentance and turning deeply to God.

Poverty, homelessness, immigration, human trafficking, racism...there are many places in our world that call for our attention. We are each limited in what we can do. This season is a time to take stock of the gifts of the Spirit and review our efforts for social justice. The temptations may be to take on too much or too little. What work fills you with Spirit?

Paula McKenzie, MA '94

Sinsinawa Dominican Associate

Monday, March 11

Leviticus 19: 1-2, 11-18. Be holy, for I, your God, am holy.

Before we are called to be good, we are called to be holy. Holiness represents the relationship God desires with us. Becoming holy makes us more like God.

We are called not to lie, cheat, steal or be dishonest so we can be more like God. Not to envy, hate others as we were all made in God's image. Holiness is a way to be one with God. Trying to strive to be holy not only helps our spirit rise but helps us see others in the same light.

We all have holiness in us. We need to recognize it and uplift ourselves to be more like God who will produce that pureness in our heart to love one another.

Madhura Kadambi

Enterprise Application Developer and Database, Information Technology Services Office

Tuesday, March 12

Isaiah 55: 10-11. Thus says your God: 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; it shall not return to me void but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.

I love these verses from Isaiah that essentially say, "If I say it, I will do it." It's easy to breeze past the illustration of rain bringing life to a seed and bread to the hungry without thinking about what it means. Rain falls to the earth and nourishes the seed, the seed grows and produces wheat, the wheat is harvested and milled...you get the idea. The process is slow and deliberate, and each step matters. When we live in a time that is all about the hustle, the quick fix, or simply winning the argument, let's be more deliberate with our words and our work. Let's actually mean what we say and finish what we start, even if that

takes time. The end result will be a more fertile and fruitful world for everyone.

Martha Burnett '08

Creative Director, Marketing and Strategic Communications

Wednesday, March 13

Jonah 3: 1-10. The word of God came to Jonah a second time: "Set out for the great city of Nineveh, and announce to it the message that I will tell you." So Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh, according to God's bidding.

This text reads more like a weather report than an encouragement for Nineveh to live a more righteous life. Jonah clearly does not consider God's assignment an honor. His announcements are beyond lackluster (there's not a single exclamation mark in what seems to be a fairly urgent situation!). Jonah's blasé "Change your ways, but who knows? God's probably just going to pull the Compassion Card," is hardly motivating. Despite Jonah's dull delivery, though, God changed hearts through Jonah's words and, yes, demonstrated God's grand compassion. What we don't get to see is Jonah's "I knew it would end this way; what a waste of time!" moment in Chapter 4. We are often tasked with things that we cannot immediately value. Even in the face of good results, our stubbornness blinds the fact that our work is what made a promising outcome possible. We are called to participate in community for the good of others, not solely ourselves. We each have an important voice and God will use our voices (however unenthusiastic), to create good we never could have conjured alone.

Hollie McCrea Olson, MA '17

Assistant Director of Residence Life

Thursday, March 14

Matthew 7: 7-12. Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find.

The part of this Gospel text that stood out to me most reminds me of what is talked about in 1 John 5:14. "*This is the confidence we have in*

approaching God: that if we ask anything according to God's will, God hears us."

No matter what we talk to God about, we have the assurance in knowing that the same God who created heaven and earth, and everything in it, is the same God who has our eternal best interest in mind. Jesus tore the veil that stood between us sinners and God. No longer are we dead in sin. We don't have to earn or work for God's love. Jesus is our mediator. We are able to pray to God because Jesus took away our sins. He rose to life and lives in us forever. We are made holy through Jesus. Thanks be to God for sending Jesus as our atoning sacrifice.

Natasha Zanoia '17

Friday, March 15

Ezekiel 18: 21-28. You say, "God's way is not fair!" Hear now, house of Israel: Is it my way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair?

People can change. The wicked can reform and become good. Unfortunately, the virtuous can change in the other direction as well. So far this does not seem very surprising. What strikes me about this passage, though, is Ezekiel's belief that the community would rebel against this philosophy, find it unfair. Ezekiel seems to assume a community belief that either people can't change or that when they do change the punishment (for the formerly wicked) or the reward (for the originally virtuous) should not. Ezekiel reminds his people that God, not they, determines God's laws. Perhaps that was not the last time such a reminder was necessary.

*Steven Post
Professor, Department of Mathematics*

Saturday, March 16

Matthew 5: 43-48. I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.... for if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?

I believe there is good in everyone. No one is better than another. We need to be there for one another.

Daily we should reflect back on our own day: did we show compassion, were we a good listener, did we speak with a direct tone or did we look to blame and point out faults. We are all God's people with many different views but we all have an inner spirit that should always stay true in our hearts, and show in our actions in our community and surroundings from day to day. We will always have challenges in our life; it's what we do with the challenges and the choices we make. Following in God's ways keeps us grounded. God has made a difference in our lives and we should hand out our good will to others. It never hurts to do the right thing, and feeling grateful for those feel-good moments is our reward.

Becky Meyer-Halverson

Custodial Supervisor, Facilities Operations

Second Sunday in Lent, March 17

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18. God took Abram outside and said: 'Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. Just so,' God added, 'shall your descendants be.' Abram put his faith in God, who credited it to him as an act of righteousness.

I love Abraham, that old weather-beaten
unwavering nomad, when God called to him,
no tender hand wedged time into his stay.
His faith erupted him into a way
far-off and strange. How many miles are there
from Ur to Haran? Where does Canaan lie,
or slow mysterious Egypt sit and wait?
How could he think his ancient thigh would bear
nations, or how consent that Isaac die,
with never an outcry nor an anguished prayer?
I think, alas, how I manipulate
dates and decisions, pull apart the dark,
dally with doubts here and with counsel there,
take out old maps and stare.

Was there a call at all, my fears remark.
I cry out: Abraham, old nomad you,
are you my father? Come to me in pity.
Mine is a far and lonely journey, too.

Selected Poetry of Jessica Powers, Sheed and Ward 1989

Monday, March 18

Luke 6: 36-38. Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. 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.

There are a lot of imperatives in this reading! At first glance it may seem impossible to live up to these demands. We may even wonder: what's in it for me?

Upon further reflection, though, we realize that within these seemingly unreasonable demands are promises of incredible abundance flowing to us if we are faithful in our efforts. Think of a market vendor selling rice by the bag. A generous one will not fill the bag loosely, but will shake it down and add more to ensure the customer gets as much as possible. That's the kind of overflowing abundance that we can confidently anticipate as we humbly seek to transform our relationships.

Thus, each day we are invited – even impelled – to be our highest self with others and to see the best in them in return. It's a tall order, but the blessings are well worth it!

Karen Franker Ed.D. '16
Associate Academic Dean for Online and Adult Learning

Tuesday, March 19

Matthew 1: 16, 18-21, 24. Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph

her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly... The angel of God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph...do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Today we celebrate the most famous father of the New Testament—Joseph, the carpenter, husband of Mary and father of Jesus—our model of faith. We have no words from him recorded in Scripture, but we have his faith-filled actions described, and we can imagine how deeply he lived his faith.

Look at the beautiful mural in St. Joseph's Chapel, Regina Hall—see Joseph's steady gaze as his hand lovingly protects his wife and child, and remember his valiant faith:

- » Meditate on his faith in his beloved Mary when she told him she was pregnant before their marriage
- » Recall his faith in responding to God's voice in a dream, quickly saving his wife and infant son from danger
- » Consider his faith in teaching his son the meaning of the Torah, the Prophets, and the Psalms (as well as the art of carpentry)
- » Reflect on his deep faith as he frantically sought to find their lost Jesus in Jerusalem
- » Finally, consider the faith of Joseph as he lay sick and dying, supported, embraced, and prayed for by Mary and Jesus at his side. Ask Joseph for deeper faith, especially in life's difficult circumstances.

Mary Paynter, O.P.
Professor Emerita of English

Wednesday, March 20

Jeremiah 18:18-20. They said, "Come, let's make plans against Jeremiah; for the teaching of the law by the priest will not be lost, nor will counsel

from the wise, nor the word from the prophets. So come, let's attack him with our tongues and pay no attention to anything he says." Listen to me, O Lord; hear what my accusers are saying! Should good be repaid with evil?

So, what's going on here? Is this another example of a wayward tribe and a prophet trying to convince them of their wayward ways? The tribe doesn't like what the prophet is saying and decides to attack and silence him... the Old Testament seems full of such tales. But what is God telling us here? The people of Judah didn't like being criticized. Well, who does? In our mediated world, we surround ourselves with those who agree with us, like us. We can defend our positions and attack those who disagree, but what have we truly gained? Think about how you respond to criticism.

Leigh Maxwell

Associate Professor, Communication Studies

Thursday, March 21

Jeremiah 17:5-10. Blessed is the person 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.

I grew up in Wisconsin, surrounded by the verdant landscape, but my grandparents spent their winters in Tucson, Arizona. In my youth, I traveled to Arizona to visit them. I was fascinated by the contrast between the abundant, green Wisconsin landscape and the Sonoran Desert permeated with sanguine rocks, barren earth, and Saguaro and prickly pear cactus.

I remember tumbling weeds rolling aimlessly across the highway. Tumbleweeds just blow in any direction with the wind. Some people are like tumbleweeds, with no set course, blowing in the wind without the guidance of God.

The blessed life is the life lived with God, creating deep roots. This is like a tree planted in the ground by a riverbank. The blessed life is

what God can do for us and through us. You can live a blessed life and become a blessing to others by hoping and trusting in God.

Robert Tarrell

Professor, Art Department

Friday, March 22

Genesis 37: 3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a. Jacob loved Joseph best of all his sons, for he was the child of his old age; and he had made him a long tunic. When his brothers saw that their father loved him best of all his sons, they hated him so much that they would not even greet him.

Joseph was loved and favored by his father and hated and abused by his brothers.

The brothers conspired to kill Joseph but after Reuben intervened, his life was spared but enslaved for twenty pieces of silver. Later Joseph, because of his ability to interpret dreams, rose to prominence with the Pharaoh in Egypt and saved the Egyptian people from famine.

What strikes me the most in this story is the envy in the hearts of the brothers. They saw no value in Joseph or his dreams –unlike his father who recognized his worth - and he was someone to be scorned. Sin was in their hearts and they acted upon it.

Lent is a time for us to reflect on what is in our own hearts. Do we harbor hate towards someone we perceive as privileged, favored or simply different from us? Do we in turn act on these feelings?

Shawn Johnson

Academic and Career Counselor

Saturday, March 23

Micah 7: 14-15, 18-20. Who is there like you, the God who removes guilt, who does not persist in anger forever but delights rather in clemency..? You will cast into the depths of the sea all our sins...

As I read this passage, the phrase “You will cast into the depths of the

sea all our sins” catches my attention. Today, we can read these words and recognize that this verse foreshadows the coming and crucifixion of Jesus. We can now understand that our Father provided the ultimate sacrifice, God’s one and only Son, to pardon our sins once and for all. As imperfect humans, we can never atone for our sins through our own doing. We can, however, praise God for God’s mercy and aim to honor God by living out a Christ-centered life. It is humbling to think of how powerful and special our God is, yet God so strongly desires to nurture a personal relationship with us that God provided a solution to our sins that would otherwise separate us from God.

Caleb Hill

Sophomore, Accounting major; Spanish minor

Third Sunday in Lent, March 24

Exodus 3: 1-8a, 13-15. Leading the flock across the desert, Moses came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There an angel of God appeared to Moses in fire flaming out of a bush. As he looked on, Moses was surprised to see that the bush, though on fire, was not consumed. So Moses decided, “I must go over to look at this remarkable sight, and see why the bush is not burned.”

How are we prompted to look deeper in our spiritual life and in our interactions? As we see in this reading, it begins with a genuine curiosity. Moses chose to look twice, engage, and see what was to be revealed in the burning bush. God calls out to him and what does Moses do? He essentially asks, “Okayyyyy, and who are you really, and what do I do when the Israelites don’t believe me?!” God responds, tell them “I am who I am.” Some scholars have pointed out that the puzzling grammar may be captured as “I will be what I will be.” God’s name is a promise that whatever is needed, God will creatively be at work. God’s instruments are endless, for God’s voice radiates through every living creature. How will we continue to listen to the voice of God in all that is as we accompany one another in making God’s mercy and justice known?

Laurin Dodge

Assistant Director for Community Building, Dominican Life

Monday, March 25 – The Annunciation

Luke 1: 26-38. Mary was greatly troubled by what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Surely Mary was bewildered by this interruption in her daily routine. This “announcement” was cause for fear and uncertainty. Where had this message come from? What was being asked of her? How would she respond? By carefully pondering all these things, allowing her heart to be moved, Mary’s “Yes” made way for the Divine Presence to enter our world.

It seems that we are bombarded on a daily basis with multiple messages—interruptions to our daily routines—that raise similar questions for us. What are we hearing? Where does it come from? What response is needed to reveal the compassionate presence of a loving God-Spirit among us? Perhaps we can turn to Mary as our model: we listen; we ponder the meaning of what we have heard; we get in touch with our emotional response; we question and seek information. In this way, our trust begins to build as we recognize the Spirit moving within us, pointing the way we are called to respond.

Like Mary, may we trust that whatever response is needed we can rely on the belief that “nothing will be impossible for God!”

Sheila Fitzgerald, O.P. ‘63

Tuesday, March 26

Matthew 18:21-35. Peter approached Jesus and asked him, “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often must I forgive them? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.”

Forgiveness is the primary focus of this scripture, and it interestingly goes on to remind us that although we may assume we should forgive unconditionally under God’s guidance, we should not lose sight of the importance of accountability and settling debt.

A long-time friend began regularly loaning his old riding lawn mower to one of his neighbors, who used it to mow lawns for others on weekends. More often than not, when we would talk or visit, my friend seemed to be repairing something that his neighbor broke on the unit, and I couldn't understand (and he wouldn't tell me) why he continued to loan his mower out, and wouldn't charge for the parts or labor despite the damages. He just said things like, "You know I enjoy tinkering". This went on for two whole seasons.

My friend passed away unexpectedly a few years back, and I eventually asked his wife about his uncharacteristic habit. She smiled and said, "well, I suppose it's ok to tell people now...". One of their neighbor's kids was born with a congenital heart defect, and the insurance copays for the (successful) repair were significant. At the time, the mowing income helped them stay on their feet.

A few months later the neighbor bought her a new mower, takes meticulous care of her lawn every week and won't accept a dime in payment for his work.

Scott Lanphear

Environmental, Health, Safety and Risk Manager

Wednesday, March 27

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9. "For what great nation is there that has gods so close to it as our God, is to us whenever we call upon God? Or what great nation has statutes and decrees that are just as this whole law which I am setting before you today?"

We have an approachable God, a listening God, we are fully known by our God. When we call to God, God is near and answers us. When we despair, God brings joy. When we are afraid, God is our comfort. When we are weary, God lifts up our head. All God's ways, God's plans, God's truths are good and are for our good. It is because of God that we live with a fullness of heart.

Our God sees through the mess inside of us, calls us near and tells us that we can start again. We do not have to hide from God or fear God.

We are fully known and loved by God. God's grace is ridiculous and God will always pursue our hearts. We are so quick to flee, to doubt and to go astray, but surrender to God's kindness. How real, how wide, how rich, how high is God's love for you. When you call upon God, God is already waiting.

Chaia Huff

Head Women's Basketball Coach, Fitness Center Director

Thursday, March 28

Jeremiah 7: 23-28. Thus says our God: This is what I commanded my people: Listen to my voice; then I will be your God and you shall be my people. Walk in all the ways that I command you, so that you may prosper... But they obeyed not, nor did they pay heed. They walked in the hardness of their evil hearts and turned their backs, not their faces to me.

As I reflect on this scripture, I think of the many different ways that we fail to walk in all the ways that we are commanded. It reminds me about the various times I have turned my back and crossed the street to avoid a homeless person. Or the time I avoided a person in need, because it was a burden. This makes me think about all the different ways I have been called by God and how God speaks through these individuals. Each time I turned my back or avoided them I failed to hear God's message and failed to act as a servant. This scripture reminds me to pause and listen in order to serve and walk in the way I am commanded.

Adam Krueger

Head Athletic Trainer, Athletics

Friday, March 29

Hosea 14:2-10. Thus says our God: "Return, O Israel, to your God; you have collapsed through your guilt. Take with you words, and return to God"... "I will heal their defection," says our God, "I will love them freely; for my wrath is turned away from them."

This text reminds us that forgiveness is critical for us to flourish and be happy. Even God needed to forgive Israel for turning their backs and

embrace them once again. In the same way, we must be strong and forgive those who have wronged us. We must give them the opportunity to make amends and move on with our lives.

Just as Israel, we must also be willing to ask for forgiveness, learn from our past and move forward with new conviction and hope for prosperity. As hard as granting forgiveness can be, it is often more difficult to seek forgiveness and not just hope things will take care of themselves. And, as with Israel in this text, our need for forgiveness may simply be because we believed things will be better if we turn our backs on those who love us most. It is easy to take them for granted.

Al Brisack

Director of Athletics, Baseball Coach

Saturday, March 30

Luke 18: 9-14. ...For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

This Gospel reading solidifies that God wants a personal relationship with us. God is looking for our personal, not public, displays of repenting. I find that the more intimate my relationship with God, the more I feel connected to God and more at peace. I also find that in worship spaces I am more comfortable with simple surroundings, and feel distracted by the showiness of elaborately decorated or ornate surroundings.

Elizabeth Reuter '19

Mail Center Lead

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 31

Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32. This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.

To me, this reading is about love and acceptance. Jesus loves and accepts the tax collectors even though they were despised by most people.

The father loves and accepts his youngest son who left his family and thought only of himself until he was left with nothing and only then

came back and asked for forgiveness. The father loves and accepts his older son who has a difficult time forgiving his brother. Above all, God loves, accepts, and forgives us when we have sinned and feel hopeless. God's forgiveness is available to us at all times. We just have to ask for it.

Carla Pool

Technology Specialist, Information Technology Services Office

Monday, April 1

Isaiah 65: 17-21. Thus says our God: 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.

As we experience this season of Lent, we think about Isaiah's scripture reading. We as chosen people of God need to look into our lives of the past and make conscious effort to live more Christian lives. By following God's commands our lives will be filled with peace and love in this world and the next.

In today's world, there is so much choice. People are pulled in so many directions that it's difficult, but it's important to live out the values that are important to you. Following your values and being true to yourself will put you in a good place for a fulfilling life.

Suann Saltzberry '05, MA '09

Assistant Director of Athletics

Tuesday, April 2

Ezekiel 47: 1-9, 12. Once more he measured off a thousand, but there was now a river through which I could not wade; for the water had risen so high it had become a river that could not be crossed except by swimming. He asked me, "Have you seen this, son of man?"

Ezekiel's vision of the River of Life that flows from the temple is a powerful image of the depth and force of God's blessings that surround us. As we come to faith, we may first see the river at a distance, as something separate from ourselves. Maybe we see God's blessings in the

lives of others. If we are lucky, we find a guide who will lead us to the edge of the river and invite us to wade first in the shallow waters, and then encourage us deeper, gaining confidence and courage with each step. We can spend a lifetime navigating the edges of God's blessings, trusting the safety of the solid ground beneath our feet. Still, God's call is to plunge completely into the water of life, healing, and abundance. Let go. Dive in. Trust God. Experience the freedom to float.

Laura Crow

Student, Religious Studies

Wednesday, April 3

Isaiah 49: 8-15. Sing out, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth, break forth into song, you mountains. For God comforts people and shows mercy to the afflicted. But Zion said, "God has forsaken me, my God has forgotten me." Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.

After reading these verses, the first thing that comes to my mind is "God is always there for us, cares for us, guides us through the hard times like through the mountains and provides a message for all of us." God will never forget any of us and tells us not to forget caring for our family and for others.

To me this means that we should share the word of God with our family and with others, and help them through their bad times as God has provided us with love and has helped us through our good and bad times. We should thank God by providing our love and help to others during their good and their bad times.

Sharon Gallagher

Sunday Eucharist Faith Community member

Thursday, April 4

Exodus 32: 7-14. But Moses implored God, saying, "Why, O God, should your wrath blaze up against your own people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with such great power and with so strong a hand? ... Let

your blazing wrath die down; relent in punishing your people...”

It is important to remember that even in times of hurt and anger we must focus on our ability to forgive. When our friends, family, peers and colleagues act in ways that cause us distress we must acknowledge that the actions of others are rarely undertaken with a true desire for contempt. As God is able to recognize the need to forgive we must also find ways to be accepting and forgiving. Setting aside rash emotions and ego to simply forgive allows for the cultivation of deeper and more meaningful relationships in spaces free of negativity and strife. The ability to approach times of distress with feelings of forgiveness and a desire to move forward will benefit not only your own wellbeing but also help to lift up those who unwillingly cause harm. Through focusing on a promise to forgive, we will each contribute the perpetuation of a compassionate society.

Victoria Palmisano

Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Affairs, School of Business

Friday, April 5

Psalm 34: 17-23. When the just cry out, God hears them, and from all their distress rescues them. God is close to the brokenhearted; and those who are crushed in spirit God saves.

While reflecting on this Psalm and how it might be found relevant for us, the Edgewood College community in 2019, I learned that one of my Sinsinawa Dominican sisters was growing weaker and had entered hospice at our Saint Dominic Villa at Sinsinawa. Though our winter fog was a bit formidable, I knew some good angels would protect me and off I drove to the Villa to see her, to thank Sister for her love and life of service and gracious leadership; I had known her since she taught in the kindergarten in the Edgewood Campus School some fifty years ago and I'd wave and walk past her classroom each day enroute to my history major classes at Edgewood College!

My wintry afternoon with Sister turned out to be a profound experience... it was a gift to be with her as she quietly began her transition into the “Thin Places.” Most touching was observing numbers

of our Sisters entering her room, making their way (often with the assistance of a walker) right up to Sister's bedside, praying over her and blessing her for the journey. A few, because of dementia or aging, no longer had the capacity to verbalize a "formal" prayer....sometimes, their prayers were a string of incoherent words, making perfect sense to them and to "our God who hears them and who is close to these broken-hearted." Each in her unique way was accompanying Sister in this final journey by expressing their love and gratitude to her for her long and faithful life among us....

Have you ever watched the writer Anne Lamott's TED Talk entitled, "12 Truths I Learned from Life"...I invite you to take the 15 minutes needed to watch this touching video meditation. At the conclusion of her talk, she quotes Ram Dass, "When all is said and done, we're really just all walking each other home."

"God saves"...like these wise Sisters at the Villa, how are we each "just walking each other home" these Lenten days?

Kathleen Phelan, O.P. '69

Saturday, April 6

Psalm 7:2-3, 9bc-12. O 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. Do me justice, O God, because I am just, and because of the innocence that is mine.

This passage in Psalms helps me to awaken again or be reminded of the fact that without God at my side I cannot survive: "lest I become the lion's prey." There are many days we forget to give praise and thanks to God and remember God's righteousness especially when things in our lives are going along rather smoothly. When things become difficult, we tend to come to God again as our "shield who saves the upright of heart." This also reminds us that seeking justice in all things is what God expects of us, "Do me justice O God, because I am just." Perhaps we have opportunities each day to advocate for others or maybe even a larger social justice issue; and simply to treat those around us as we would be treated and remember that God is a "just Judge" who punishes "malice"

but saves the Just. During Lent we set our intention to be closer to God, everyday, in all we do.

Erika Helmer

Clinical Instructor, Henry Predolin School of Nursing

Fifth Sunday in Lent, April 7

Isaiah 43: 16-21. Thus says our God: Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; see, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers.

Reading through the scripture I cannot help but dwell on the portion of the passage that states “Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; see, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” As individuals it is easy to focus on the things of the past and say to ourselves “I wish I never did that” or “I wish I did this.” The passage reminds me that no matter where we are in life God is faithful through it all. Although we can never change the past, we can focus on the things that God is doing in us currently and has planned for our future.

Nikki Charlestin

Area Director, Residence Life

Monday, April 8

John 8: 12-20. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground

In this scripture Jesus models for me the act of compassion through his simple acts responding to the scribes and the Pharisees. Jesus was not quick to make a judgment or feel threatened by their approach. He did not become angry or only hear the word of the law. Instead he responds first by bending down and he writes in the ground with his finger, before answering them. In moments like this, during tense times of strife, Jesus models for me how we must take that time to pause and reflect. His simple act of writing first, for me creates that space in time to hold back before answering, to be thoughtful of the consequence. His

own question here keeps us in touch with our own humanity. He opens the door to help us listen to our spirit and to forgive, and to feel the depths of compassion towards ourselves and towards each other.

Maria Yelle

Associate Professor, Henry Predolin School of Nursing

Tuesday, April 9

Numbers 21: 4-9. Then the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned in complaining against God and you.” So Moses prayed for the people... and accordingly made a bronze serpent and mounted it on a pole...

Moses provides an example of stamina and compassion in this passage. A reluctant leader from the start, the people in his care do not prove to be easy travelers. The Israelites have just departed Mount Hor, where they had mourned the death of Moses’ brother, the priest Aaron, no doubt furthering their despair at the difficult, uncertain, long journey they faced. The people are punished by God for their ungrateful behavior, sending them running to Moses begging for intervention. It would have been easy for Moses to insist they bear a just punishment, wishing to be able to grieve for his brother in peace and pray for strength for the continued journey without him. Instead, he again follows divine orders to provide relief to the people. May we, as leaders of those on uncertain journeys in difficult times, be capable of the compassion, stamina, and empathy that our students may need.

Carrie C Firman

Associate Professor of Graphic Design, Coordinator of the Graphic and Web Design Programs, Art Department

Wednesday, April 10

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.

Like many human rulers, King Nebuchadnezzar fell prey to the drunkenness of power, even demanding that his subjects worship a golden idol constructed in his honor. Impossible to ignore, the obelisk soared 90 feet above the Babylonian plain.

When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to join the crowd before Nebuchadnezzar's idol, the "livid" King turned his fury to fire and raised the heat of the exterminator's furnace to maximum.

The three men believed it better to endure this punishment than submit to the evil that Nebuchadnezzar represented. They trusted God to carry them out of fiery persecution, but even if they should die, like many courageous human change-makers do, they trusted that their faithful resistance would make an important difference. Indeed, they were correct.

This story reminds us that it takes exceptional courage to challenge the powerful. It also gives us hope, knowing that God will carry us through overpowering affliction, and that goodness can prevail over evil if we do our part.

What is the temporary "white-hot fire" you must endure to bring lasting good to the people of the world?

Julie Dunbar

Professor, Music Department, Faculty Development Coordinator

Thursday, April 11

Genesis 17: 3-9. God spoke to Abraham: I will maintain my covenant with you and your descendants after you throughout the ages... On your part, you must keep my covenant throughout the ages.

"Never Again" is not a slogan, temporary mantra or bumper sticker. "Never Again" is a statement of intent honoring the atrocities of the Holocaust and pledging to never allow the same. Yet it seems that the belief, the intent which many of us embrace is being challenged. In some parts of our world forms of racism exist in the curriculum we teach our children. Some places embrace a separate and unequal world based upon bias.

Abraham stood strong and perseverant. God inspired him to keep God's covenant through the ages.

Perhaps we should all be inspired or re-inspired to live and re-envision "Never Again." For our marginalized women, children and men. For those living the pain in the shadows of hostile actions due to race, religion, gender, disability, or difference.

Make today the day you live the covenant, become awakened to live social justice. Cry out "Never Again!"

Tom Holub

Professor, School of Education

Friday, April 12

Psalm 18: 2-7. My God, my rock of refuge, my shield, my stronghold! In my distress I called upon God and cried out to God; from the temple God heard my voice, and my cry reached God's ears.

The reassuring words, "From the temple, God heard my voice and my cry reached God's ears" catches my attention in this psalm. Through this journey of life, there are times when I feel overwhelmed by all the worries of this world. It is during these times that I feel as though God is too far away to see the suffering of people. I wonder to myself, "Will God hear me when I pray?" or "Am I worthy to ask God for help in my time of despair?" Reading this psalm reassures me that no matter where I am in life, or how distant I may feel from God, God will always hear my voice, and my cry will reach God's ears. This is because I am God's daughter, I am worthy, and I am loved. God has placed specific people in my life, a community of beloved brothers and sisters whom I am confident will lend me an ear whenever I need one, or a shoulder to cry on whenever I need one.

Natasha Sichula

Junior, Cytotechnology major

Saturday, April 13

Ezekiel 37:21-28. This is what God says: "I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land...I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant...My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people."

This passage describes how God redeems the children of Israel from their past sins, unites them as one people, and gives them their own land. God makes an everlasting covenant of peace with them to be their God, and they are God's people.

For me, these words bring great comfort, with a hope of salvation and redemption for us all. In these troubled times of war and conflict in the Middle East and other parts of the world, we must pray for a new covenant of peace.

Andrea Byrum
Professor, Foreign Language Department

Passion (Palm) Sunday, April 14

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...I gave my back to those who beat me...my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced...

This passage brings to mind the value of compassion. Upon first glance, one might think the subject of this passage is a doormat. I beg to differ. It takes great fortitude to withstand the attacks of others and to act with grace and compassion. It would often be easy to meet an assault by behaving in similar form, but that response rarely serves to resolve the actual problem. We must acknowledge that the person with whom we are dealing may be going through personal and/or professional issues of which we are unaware, and attempt to view the situation from their perspective.

By allowing those with whom we interact to air their frustrations in a space free of judgment or retaliation, we do not diminish our own senses of self. Such situations give us the opportunity to assist someone who may be having a difficult time in their life.

Trish Tegen

Assistant Dean for Academic Operations, Office of Academic Affairs

Monday of Holy Week, April 15

Isaiah 42: 1-7. I, your God, have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand; I formed you, and set you as a covenant of the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness.

God is calling us to be God's servant for people: to change the world around us in a way that fosters justice. God also asks for patience, realizing that frustration may come but not allowing it to hinder our journey. This scripture calls to mind the duty that every human must be aware of the world around them. God calls us to speak for justice and truth, guiding others in this path. God is also calling us individually. The second part of this scripture reminds us that one person has the ability to create change and be light for those who are darkness. Even when we feel small, God knows what we are capable of and supports our mission to reach our full potential. This is important to remember in the world we live in that is filled with injustice. If we listen to God's calling, we can make change.

Catherine Kiesler

Junior, Math major

Tuesday of Holy Week, April 16

Isaiah 49:1-6. God called me from birth, from my mother's womb God gave me my name... God made me a polished arrow, in a quiver God hid me. You are my servant, God said to me, Israel, through whom I show my glory.

Not many people would be happy to receive the title of ‘servant.’ In today’s society, leadership skills are highly valued and are often coded for authority and power. We often forget that to be a good leader, we need to be good servants. Service is at the center of strong and healthy relationships. It is not intended to be an activity that we must fulfill out of a sense of duty, but rather an activity that we execute with gratitude and love. God called us to a life of service, choosing us from birth to share God’s glory and love with others.

During this season of Lent, let’s remember what God called us for.

Belkis Cerrato Caceres

Assistant Professor, Economics, Social Science Department

Wednesday of Holy Week, April 17

Matthew 26:14-25. The disciples approached Jesus and said, “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?” He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The teacher says, My appointed time draws near...’

Something was going down. Jesus knew it. He called it: “*My appointed time draws near.*” Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane and knew he would be betrayed. Jesus tells Peter that Peter will deny him, which, of course, he does. Jesus knows that one of the disciples, Judas, has already betrayed him. They are all uncertain and fearful. Their lives were at stake, and fear does funny things to people. Today, we are also living in times of fear and uncertainty, ranging from global to local issues. We can betray and deny as the disciples did, and we can judge and condemn. Or, we could focus on Jesus’ model of acceptance, compassion, and forgiveness. We could look to the Dominican sisters’ legacy as a way out of uncertainty and fear. Doing so may just embolden our creative moral imagination and create a future full of promise.

Suzanne Otte Ed.D. ‘14

Ed.D. Research and Writing Center Director, School of Education

Holy Thursday, April 18

John 13: 1-15. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

Growing up, my parish priest washed the feet of select parishioners during the Holy Thursday service, as happens in many churches globally. People were chosen by status, and participation was more of a pat on the back than an example of compassion and humility. In recent years, Pope Francis has challenged the tradition of using the foot washing service as recognition of status or achievement by washing the feet of diverse spiritual seekers: migrants, refugees, and prisoners, Catholics and non-Catholics alike. These newsworthy acts serve to refocus our interpretation of the scripture and the tradition. Jesus does not call us to remain safe and insulated, but to go out and serve the most invisible, the marginalized, and to do so humbly. He calls us to ask ourselves, how can I work for justice? How can I wash the feet of others, and when do I need to allow my own feet to be washed?

Karen Pritchard

Bonner Leader Program Assistant, School of Integrative Studies

Good Friday, April 19

Hebrews 4: 14-16; 5: 7-9. Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For 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.

I often have a difficult time thinking of Good Friday as being good given the severe physical torture and horrendous death suffered by Jesus. But that day, and every day since, is good, isn't it? Jesus' death provided the means for us to be reconciled to God. For Jesus and God, the day was good as the gulf between us was bridged so that our relationships could be restored. Another good – Jesus, our high priest, understands our frailties and failures and provides mercy and grace when we need it the most. A further good – the grace and mercy

we receive can be shared with others. In 2 Corinthians 1:3 – 4, Paul explains that God comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others with the comfort we receive from God. So, on this Good Friday, and every day, we can take comfort in our reconciliation with God made possible through Jesus' death, and bring good to others by sharing the grace, mercy and comfort we receive.

Mark Barnard

Professor and Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, School of Business

Holy Saturday, April 20

Psalm 104: 1-2, 5-6, 10-14, 24, 35. O God, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

The Lenten season and Holy Week provide an opportunity to reflect upon *all* of God's gifts to us, including the gift of Creation itself as we continue Spring celebrations into Earth Week. My reflection on Creation is linked with the words of Micah 6:8 –

God has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what is required of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

The call to act justly, mercifully, and humbly in this passage is an obligation not just to ourselves and to one another but rather to all of Creation—to all of what God has shown us is good. To walk humbly with God is to recognize the wondrous diversity in all of God's Creation; to see that we are but a small part of this Creation; and to accept our dependence upon all of Creation for sustenance, health, and spirituality. Thus, to act justly and mercifully as we are called to do is to act sustainably. In this season as we renew our spiritual relation with God, let us also renew our pursuit of a just, merciful, and humble relationship with God's Creation.

Jacob Griffin

Chairperson of Environmental Studies, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences

Easter Sunday, April 21

John 20: 1-9. Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

Each of the four Gospel accounts has a so-called empty tomb narrative, in which women who were the witnesses of Jesus' internment become the witnesses of its futility. In truth, this particular tomb is not so much empty as it is filled with the victory of God over death—indicated, in the case of this Gospel, by the abandoned grave clothes. Perhaps this is not entirely unexpected, as God has a curious relationship with emptiness: empty containers are filled, empty wombs are blessed and rain is sent on empty deserts. Indeed, God first created the world from universal emptiness, and began its re-creation in the emptiness of this tomb.

So I wonder just how I should regard those empty places within myself. Do I really need to scramble around trying to fill them? Maybe rather than the deficiency I perceive them to be, they are the emptiness from which God is even now re-creating me.

Jill Kirby

Associate Professor, Biblical Studies, Religious Studies Department

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.

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

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

Dominican Life and Mission

*Reflections available during Lent at
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