



Reflections
— for the —
SEASON
— of —
L E N T

EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
— 2021 —

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The Season of Lent

Lent is the annual period of preparation for Easter, which begins with Ash Wednesday on February 17th this year, and culminates with Easter Triduum, April 2nd to April 4th. In the Christian tradition, Lent is a time of renewal, soul-searching and repentance—a time for reflection while taking stock of one’s life in preparation for the 50-day celebration of Easter.

This booklet is a collection of Lenten Reflections by contributors from throughout the Edgewood College community. Generally, we have included only a portion of the biblical text cited 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 17

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. Perhaps God will again relent and leave behind a blessing.*

No one loves to focus on what they’ve done wrong. Yet everyone makes mistakes—small and large. In education, faculty cast a critical eye on the work of students and point out errors not to shame or sadden students, but to help the student acknowledge the error, learn from it and correct it in the future. Without that acknowledgement, students are doomed to make the same errors repeatedly. We’re all students of life, students of God. On Ash Wednesday, taking time to consider our errors, to ask forgiveness and to learn from them can lead to a stronger walk with God, a stronger faith and a stronger community. The shame of error lies in pretending error doesn’t exist. Great students admit error. And no surprise, admitting error is the best way to move on and improve, both in academia, in our community and in our personal faith walk.

Jeanne Leep
Professor of Theatre Arts, Chair of Theatre Arts Department

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Deuteronomy 30: 15-20. *See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of your God...by loving God, walking in God's ways...then you shall live...and God will bless you...But if your heart turns away and you do not hear...you shall perish.*

The words today are profound, yet the message is simple. Follow God's commandments and you will live, but turn your heart away and you perish. That makes sense, right? But the almost forceful command in this passage is "Choose life so that you may live." Jesus Christ is life. Yesterday, Ash Wednesday, we renewed our baptismal promises, and in that way we chose life, we chose Jesus Christ. Every step of this Lenten journey we remember that at the end Jesus must die. But there is new life and a new beginning in the Resurrection. Perhaps for your Lenten journey you have decided to "give something up," like a New Year's resolution. Maybe this year, instead of giving up chocolate for the tenth year in a row, you can "choose life" for a daily Lenten activity – smile, hold the door, help someone or listen to them. All these life-giving activities are a way to celebrate our life through Jesus, our Savior.

Rachel DeBruin
Edgewood College B.A., 2009

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Isaiah 58: 1-9a. *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.*

The thought-provoking passage from Isaiah asks us to turn to the dispossessed and the downtrodden, to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and set free the oppressed of this world. With the soaring pandemic, when so many people globally have lost their jobs, their livelihood, and their loved ones, while countless families in our own communities cannot afford to pay rent or put food on their tables, the message of the Scriptures carries new significance and relevance for us. These ageless words of wisdom and compassion compel us to open up our hearts to our neighbors, and invite us to be empathetic and responsive to human suffering and adversity.

Sayeeda Mamoon
Professor of French

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Isaiah 58:9b-14. *If you call the Sabbath a delight...if you honor it by not following your ways, seeking your own interests, or speaking with malice -- then you shall delight in God...*

Only you, in your heart, know what the best Sabbath time is for you. Donna Schaper in her book, *Sabbath Sense*, calls it “spiritual leisure,” “a turn in the road back to grace.” I especially like this image. It makes the dictionary definition of grace as “the influence or spirit of God operating in humans to regenerate or strengthen them” come alive. Whatever Sabbath is, I like to call it an intentional time and space for God to enter in. Sabbath is a time of re-creation, a time of remembering who and whose we are.

Practicing Your Path, Holly W. Whitcomb
(Augsburg Books, 2002), p. 16

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, FEBRUARY 21

Mark 1:12-15. *And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."*

Two verbs stand out in this reading for the first Sunday in Lent: Repent and Believe. The call - and challenge - of Lent could not be summed up more succinctly. *Metanoia*, the word translated as “repent” means making a fundamental change in your thinking AND living. In the words you say and the actions you do. Mark asks us to consider what changes we must make in our thinking not only individually, but as an Edgewood College community and as a society. What changes must be made in the way we live and interact with one another? What are the things we can do to become a more just and compassionate force in the world? This is the work of Lent. It will take more than the 40 days allotted on the church calendar for changes to take root, become real and permanent. But let’s make a good beginning, together this Lenten season.

Cristie Jacobs
Executive Assistant to the President

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Psalms 23: 1-3a, 4-6. *God is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

Something that spoke to me in this text is in the very first line. The text uses a metaphor of God as a shepherd of people. Although this metaphor is commonly found throughout the Bible, it is one of my favorite metaphors for who God is and what God is like. This metaphor also tells us who WE are supposed to be. Our culture today valorizes wealth and status and being a shepherd or a sheep is neither of those things. On its surface, this metaphor may not seem like much, but looking into it more, it encourages us to reject our “wants” and recognize our needs for God.

Jacob Lawrence

Junior, Political Science major, Philosophy minor

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

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, so shall my word be...*

I see in this passage two components that make for a return to a more “fruitful” world. During days of strife, we look to changes in the conditions of our lives to provide a balm. We think of an election, a vaccine, a new conversation on race as rain from heaven that “watered the earth” and will relieve the pain we feel in our lives. However, I also read in this a second step that is necessary. One must “sow” the earth to be availed by these gifts. I reflect on this in our society, we have great reason to be hopeful, for rain is on the horizon, but have we sowed the earth enough to receive these gifts?

David Cordie

Assistant Professor of Geoscience

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Jonah 3: 1-10. *Jonah began his journey through the city, and had gone but a single day's walk announcing, "Forty days more and Nineveh shall be destroyed," when the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.*

Without a doubt, we are living through a strange, uncertain, and fearful time in history. Perhaps we did not create the COVID virus, but if we are being honest, humanity is certainly responsible for its rapid-fire spread. As a result, this fluctuating, alien virus has forced us all to confront the way we have been living

our lives. We have had no choice but to slow down, contemplate, listen, revise, and simplify. Simplify. The people of Nineveh cast off their worldly goods and dressed themselves in simple sack cloth. For many people today the loss of income, inability to travel, social restrictions and forced seclusion have created a “sack cloth” of necessary simplicity around us. Spirituality in all forms asks us to reexamine our values and beliefs, to recommit to those things we know intrinsically to be right and good, and I know that I can no longer excuse myself from this task by saying I have too many things on my plate—my life has been simplified without my direct permission. I have the time—I am wearing the sack-cloth—‘tis the season for reflection.

Susan Nanning-Sorenson

Theatre Education Senior Instructor

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25

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.*

The verses imply that there are steps one has to follow to get what one needs. However, this process cannot be done alone. First you must ask for help, whether that be from someone you know or a stranger. Then you must take the next step in finding what it is you are looking for. This may get frustrating, but one cannot give up. Once that is realized, you will need to be persistent with getting what you seek. This is applicable in today’s society when we need each other even more. One needs to realize that life is a journey. We may not always know what it is we are seeking or where we will find it, but if we count on each other and our faith God will always answer the door and give us what we need.

Jamie Maglior

Dominican Life Administrative Assistant, COR Program Coordinator

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Ezekiel 18: 21-28. *Do I indeed derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked? says God. Do I not rather rejoice when they turn from their evil way that they may live?*

Sometimes it feels awesome to sit in our own wickedness, doesn’t it? Our culture even celebrates it. The wittiest jab at another gets rewarded with laughter and praise; “ghosting” people has become an acceptable means to “address” uncomfortable situations; sitting in our own righteous anger becomes

a pastime as we replay for others how we shot the cleverest comeback; we even rehearse imaginary conflicts that haven't actually happened just to hear our wickedness preside! It's exhausting. Ezekiel reminds us that we do not have to live like this. Despite the momentary high that "wickedness" brings, it is not sustainable nor lasting in joy. God provides a consistent soft place to land for us, even in our hardest moments. While wicked tendencies might look tempting, we are called to choose kindness, understanding, curiosity, and love. I hear it – it sounds very "kumbaya" and I hear my own snarky (wicked?) voice sneering at those fluffy words. And still, I know that in practice, choosing a soft landing feels healthier, cozier, and closer to God for me.

Hollie McCrea Olson

Associate Director of Student Life, Edgewood College M.A., 2017

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Matthew 5: 43-48. *But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of the heavenly Father.*

Who are enemies? No one is trying to persecute me, but there are people in my life who cause me to hurt. Enemies can mean those who repeatedly go against my desires- in dramatic or casual form. Enemies include my tweenage daughter, my stubborn mother, my cranky neighbor. Enemies include the stranger in the store without a mask or the capitol rioter hoping to overthrow the election. Enemies include the difficult student. What does Jesus say? Greet them. Do practical acts of helpfulness in ordinary ways. Want good for them and express this want in prayer. Loving our enemies is not natural; we need the grace of God and the Holy Spirit to do so. Let's pray.

Emily C. Zoeller

Assistant Professor of Education, Coordinator of Language and Literacy Program, Edgewood College Ed.D., 2020

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT, FEBRUARY 28

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18. *God put Abraham to the test.*

If you are looking for a verse that will leave you wandering the Lenten wilderness, this is a good one. The ancient storyteller may have been trying to convey the depths of Abraham's faith by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, and scholars disagree on just who was testing whom. I see the depths of Abraham's conviction in his continued faithfulness overcoming the natural anger of being

“tested” by God. Sometimes I feel tested. Sometimes I cannot help feeling angry with God. I am consoled by the thought that God can handle my anger.

Kevin Biller

Associate Professor of Economics

MONDAY, MARCH 1

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.*

This is my kind of passage. No confusion for me here; be the good and the rest will follow. In practice, I’m constantly reminding myself that it is not my place to pass judgement. The reward that I see isn’t a direct correlation that others aren’t, in turn, judging me. It is more that I am set free from the bounds of an imperfect judgement of another. Similarly, forgiveness isn’t so I will then be forgiven, but more that I (and they) may benefit from the freedom, the connection and the lightness that forgiving another brings. To me, these words tell us to bask in the glow of keeping a door open. Tangible “good things” may or may not follow, but a generous, compassionate heart brings its own rewards both inward and outward.

Claire Mand

Director of Student Life, Edgewood College, M.A., 2018

TUESDAY, MARCH 2

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 orphan's plea, defend the widow.*

This scripture reminds me that there is always time for forgiveness and redemption. When our faith is challenged or we do things outside of our character, we must truly listen to the word of God to find the right path forward. “Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes; cease doing evil; learn to do good.” “Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow.” In Biblical times, the pleas of the orphan and widow often went unheard. Learning to do good and redressing the wrong begins by listening to the voices of the marginalized and oppressed. In a time when justice is consistently denied, especially in black and brown communities, it is

imperative that as we seek justice, we use our voices to speak for those whose voices have been silenced (Emmett Till, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and countless others) and act to create change. When we truly listen to the word of God, turn away from our misdeeds and lean into justice, only then can Christ redeem us and return us to a life of Holy Wisdom.

Timeka Rumph

Director of Annual Fund & Stewardship

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

Jeremiah 18:18-20. *The people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem said, “Come, let us contrive a plot against Jeremiah...And so, let us destroy him by his own tongue; let us carefully note his every word.”*

Jeremiah’s passage reminds me of the power of words. When the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem decide to plot against Jeremiah they choose to “destroy him by his own tongue” and the approach they take is to “carefully note his every word.” As an educator in our academic community, I use words all the time—in the classroom, in my course syllabi, in the feedback I give on written work, along with those I say during casual conversations, in committee meetings and use in emails. In each of these venues my words impact those who are my current audience, my listeners. Am I carefully attending to every word that comes forth? How often do my words mean the exact same thing to my listeners? Jeremiah’s passage calls for each of us to be watchful and vigilant, for the words we use may not always resonate with others as we intend.

Cathy Andrews

Professor Emerita, School of Nursing

THURSDAY, MARCH 4

Jeremiah 17:5-10. *Blessed is the person who trusts in God, whose hope is God. This 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.*

Jeremiah was young, faithful to God, purpose-driven, and at times uncertain of his abilities. He fought injustice and darkness. Amid the darkness, he spoke truth and offered hope for those who sought God. His mission came at significant personal cost, but his calling came from God and gave him strength

to endure. During this Lenten season many of us are weary from the events of the last year. We faced hardships, disappointments, losses, injustices, and trials. Despite these trials, we can place our hope in God to help guide us and give us the strength to endure. While our circumstances may continue to be difficult for some time, we can trust that if we seek God, God promises to guide us, forgive our transgressions, and love and pursue us in a way that only a heavenly parent can pursue a beloved son or daughter. During what feels like a draught season, with God's guidance, we can bear fruit.

Melissa Heitzman

Assistant Professor, School of Nursing

FRIDAY, MARCH 5

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.*

How barbaric the brothers were to consider killing Joseph because he was their father's favorite child. They were so jealous of their brother, they could not imagine how their father would feel to lose his favorite son. It took Reuben to realize that and suggest throwing Joseph into a dry cistern (instead of killing him) where he intended to rescue him and return him to their father later. How many times have I been blinded by my jealousy and greed? Help me to be more like Reuben in those times. Help me to think of how my words and actions will impact my family and friends. In our country, there is much hatred between the haves and the have-nots. Help us all to see the bigger picture and allow us to work together towards peace.

Mary and Steve Ploeser

Eucharist Community Members

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

Micah 7:14-15, 18-20. *Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance...*

The Shepherd with staff is among the first images of God presented to us as children. It was a reassurance of God's love, guidance and protection for us. The shepherd uses the staff to gently guide and reunite the sheep when they have strayed. God does not respond to our straying with disgust or disdain. We are guided back, not in shame, but in the realization of God's abundant mercy and

compassion. It may be difficult to embrace and feel worthy of such mercy and compassion, and at times we might even reject it; but God does not give up on us. God's persistence is an expression of God's love seeking our conversion. It is the experience of being the beloved of God and a reminder that even in our darkest moments, we can "be-loved" by God. How might I experience and express God's mercy and compassion with those I encounter today?

Eileen McIltrout

Edgewood College, 1978

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 7

Exodus 20:1-17. *I am the Lord your God... you shall not have other gods beside me... you shall not invoke the Name of the Lord your God in vain. ... Remember the sabbath, keep it holy... [the rest of the 10 commandments].*

To say the least, 2020 gave us ample time for reflection. Restrictions on social gatherings were particularly challenging for me, especially in the work environment. The daily, informal interactions I have always taken for granted is where a great deal of work actually gets accomplished. WebEx, Zoom, etc. fail to provide as many opportunities for spontaneous interaction. With restrictions on gatherings hopefully ending soon, 2021 offers the promise of being able to refocus on building relationships. With that, Exodus 20:12-17 serves as a reminder that it is a privilege to be among each other, and therefore, we should always strive to be good, kind, and respectful to one another.

Quinn Mullikin

Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, Henry Predolin School of Nursing, Edgewood College, B.S., 2017

MONDAY, MARCH 8

2 Kings 5: 1-15ab. "My father," they said, "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." So Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of the man of God. His flesh became again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

After reading this scripture, there are two important points that resonated with me. First, we must trust in God and remember the abundance of love—no matter our sins— that God has for all of us. Second, many of us tend to overthink, complicate, or want full control of the decisions in our lives. Let us remember that God has a plan for all of us and no matter how complicated (or trivial) things

might seem, let us not overlook God's blessings. Trust in God's love and believe in God's mercy. As we experience this challenging pandemic, together, look for God's love. The laughter of a child, the smile of a colleague, the sunshine on our face, God is truly everywhere and God's blessings are abundant.

Tony R García

Interim Associate Vice President for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

TUESDAY, MARCH 9

Matthew 18:21-35. *Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus answered: "Not seven but seventy times seven..."*

Forgiveness calls for grace, compassion, and is truly a gift. It is a gift not only for the person receiving forgiveness, but also for the one offering it. Forgiveness speaks to the heart of others – Cor Ad Cor Loquitur – “Heart Speaks to Heart” – the motto of Edgewood College. It allows us to remain true to our Dominican Mission as we, a community of learners, commit to building a just and compassionate world. Forgiveness creates an atmosphere of peace and growth and is limitless. There is no limit to the number of times we have the opportunity to forgive one another and forgive ourselves. We must be prepared to forgive, as it releases the burden of a heavy heart and creates a place where one can be free, let go, heal, and continue one's journey on a lifelong search for truth.

Katie (Hargraves) Vesperman

Vice President, Office for Institutional Advancement, Edgewood College B.S., 1999

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9. *...“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.”*

Moses repeated in this passage, “...hear...observe, that you may live...” instructing how to keep God's law. My children have been through driver's training, as I did years ago. Their instruction with these educators and practice with experienced drivers imparted laws that protect the lives of all who navigate the roadways. Traffic laws become ingrained because we put them into practice every time we get behind the wheel. Moses gave MANY laws to the Israelites, and he assured them that their observance would result in wisdom,

intelligence, and that God would be close whenever they called for help. Jesus calls us to love God and our neighbors. If we do our best to remember, practice, and inspire in others this call to love, our life's journey and those around us will be blessed through our diligent efforts.

Dinean Thelen

Edgewood Eucharist Mass Pianist

THURSDAY, MARCH 11

Jeremiah 7: 23-28. *When you speak all these words to them, they will not listen to you either; when you call to them, they will not answer you. Say to them: "This is the nation that does not listen to the voice of its God, or take correction. Faithfulness has disappeared; the word itself is banished from their speech."*

In the contemporary context, these anguished words from the prophet Jeremiah bring to mind the faithlessness to hard realities so typical of our "post-truth" era. Wishful thinking, egocentrism, sociocentrism, and the bland relativism that often accompanies them, help to create a background murmuring of distortion and distraction, making it sometimes impossible to hear the sounds of the world around us. Whether the reality is global warming and the massive extinctions that attend it, a global pandemic, centuries-old suffering and injustice, or a simple election, the din of our own momentary wishes and wants, hatreds and fears, the constant nattering of our noisy beliefs in our own righteousness and supremacy, too often drown out the voice of That Which Is and Shall Be. As it was in Jeremiah's time, so it is today. We do not listen to that voice. Nor do we take correction.

John Fields

Associate Professor of Philosophy, Interim Dean, School of Liberal Arts, Education, and the Sciences

FRIDAY, MARCH 12

Hosea 14:2-10. *I will heal their defection, says our God, I will love them freely; for my wrath is turned away from them. I will be like the dew for Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall strike root like the Lebanon cedar, and put forth his shoots.*

These beautiful words of Hosea remind us that God is loving and forgiving. Words that capture my attention in this passage are, "I will love freely, I will be like dew" and "the hope of cultivating new growth." These words speak for the need of compassion and forgiveness in our tumultuous world. To me, Lent is a time for deep introspection and a time for renewal. As we reflect on

these words, I hope that our communities, our country, and our world can heal and “blossom like the lily.” I am hopeful for a welcoming world in which we can love freely and in harmony. I promise to “be like dew” and offer a sense of possibility to those less privileged than I am. I promise to renew my conviction in promoting a more just and compassionate world. May the words of Hosea, bless us with understanding. Amen.

Barbara Gallogly

Faculty, Henry Predolin School of Nursing

SATURDAY, MARCH 13

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

As I read Jesus’ message, I think about what it means to be humble and how that applies to our world today. A humble person knows they are not perfect and does not believe that they are better than other people. We have to accept our imperfections to know how to better ourselves. We have to see each other as equals if we are ever going to be rid of racism. We have to stop judging each other and get rid of this idea of “us vs. them.” How much better this world would be, if we humble ourselves.

Jon Riffle

Director of Dining Services

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 14

2 Chronicles 36:13-15. *Early and often did the God of their ancestors send messengers to them, for God had compassion on the people and God’s dwelling place.*

In this reading, we see a compassionate God giving the people of Jerusalem every opportunity to turn away from their sinfulness. Instead of condemning them, God reaches out to them, sends them messengers and tries to spare them. Like the lost people of Jerusalem God continues to reach out to us today. Let us remember God’s love, enfleshed in Jesus, sent to save us and not condemn us. We are people of light and not to remain in darkness. During this midpoint in Lent, Jesus invites us to journey in the light of God. How do we respond to our encounter with Jesus, when we meet him in others like classmates, colleagues, family, those different from ourselves? Are there

behaviors, thoughts, fears or injustices Jesus is asking to see and let go of? Remember God wants to be in relationship with us and awaits us with unconditional love and mercy.

Priscilla Torres
O.P.

MONDAY, MARCH 15

Isaiah 65: 17-21. *They shall live in the houses they build, and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant.*

I am struck by the last line of this scripture, “They shall live in the houses they build, and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant.” This sentence speaks, it seems to me, to an empowerment and a responsibility we have in creating our lives and our world. I find it refreshing to consider that we have influence and power over how we live our lives, the choices we make, and the actions we take to make our lives and our world more just and compassionate. Likewise, that we will “...eat the fruit of the vineyards [we] plant.” seems to be a guide – a hopeful guide that we will enjoy the fruits of our labor. This, to me, is a reassuring and gentle reminder that the good we do today will benefit our tomorrows.

Herb Reichelt
Major Gift Officer, Advancement

TUESDAY, MARCH 16

Ezekiel 47: 1-9, 12. *“The angel led me outside by the north gate... where I saw water trickling... 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. Along the banks of the river, fruit trees of every kind shall grow; their leaves shall not fade, nor their fruit fail”*

Water is metaphorically used throughout the Bible as the embodiment of spiritual life, growth and blessing. In this passage, water begins flowing as a small trickle emanating from underneath the temple. As it continues, a river forms that grows larger and deeper (as measured by thousands of cubits) such that Ezekiel must turn back as he cannot cross to the other side. Everywhere the water from the temple flows everything comes to life, transforming everything it touches. Fruit trees of every kind grow and fish become abundant. This is a story of hope and revitalization in our daily lives, understanding that God’s

metaphorical waters, starting as a small trickle within us, can grow in depth bringing with it spiritual growth, renewal and a new life to each of us and to the world through the resurrection of Jesus.

Colleen Gullickson

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, Henry Predolin School of Nursing, Business, & Health Sciences

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17

Isaiah 49:8-15. *“Thus,” says our God: “In a time of favor, I answer you, on the day of salvation I help you; and I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to restore the land and allot the desolate heritages, saying to the prisoners: ‘Come out!’”*

Isaiah tells us that when the time is ripe, prisoners will be set free. We think of Bryan Stevenson and his work with the Equal Justice Initiative to represent people who have been illegally convicted, unfairly sentenced, or abused in prison; or Brittany Barnett and her book, *A Knock at Midnight*, describing work to obtain clemency for those with unjust sentences. What beautiful ways to embody our community with all people and bring compassionate purpose to the place where truth and justice intersect. Compassion can inspire action to release physical chains, and it can also soften the chains of our minds. A story is told of a Tibetan monk, who upon his release from a Chinese prison, spoke of facing danger. “What danger?” asked the Dalai Lama? “Of losing compassion toward my jailers,” he replied. And what of the prisons in which we lock ourselves? What can you self-compassionately accept in yourself, paradoxically releasing its hold, tilling the soil for the day something new is ready to grow in you? This Lent, listen to your heart for the language of a wise and nurturing God to comfort and inspire you.

Julie Luecke

Associate Dean, School of Education

THURSDAY, MARCH 18

Exodus 32: 7-14. *So God relented in the punishment God had threatened to inflict on the people.*

As I reflect on the scripture text, [where Moses convinces God to spare the people after they had worshipped the golden calf], I am most captivated by the last line, “So God relented in the punishment God had threatened to inflict on the people.” I was struck by this line as it felt related to 2020’s pandemic, political climate and global reckoning with race. At a time in our history in which

our nation seems to “have become depraved and [people] have soon turned aside from the way [God] pointed out to them,” it is my hope that we too relent of our anger and instead hold room for forgiveness, learning and growth as well as accountability for ourselves, our peers, our colleagues, our students and our communities in order to forge a more just and compassionate future.

Stephanie Muñoz

Community Scholar Coordinator

FRIDAY, MARCH 19

Matthew 1: 16, 18-21, 24a. *“...the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, 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.’ When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.”*

I’m always inspired by the beautiful mural in our own St. Joseph Chapel, created by Teresita Kelly, O.P., a faculty member in the Art Department for nearly 30 years. My take on it is that it depicts Joseph as protector of a young Jesus, and as a partner for Mary. When Joseph does as the angel commands, he places his own perceived need behind the needs of his soon-to-be family. His is a tangible act of faith that exemplifies true partnership – a deeper investment in the needs of his partner than of his own needs. It’s a hard act to follow, but we would do well to try.

Ed Taylor

Director of Strategic Communications

SATURDAY, MARCH 20

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

This passage is about our vulnerability to temptations in our lives. We need to put our trust in God and know that God is with us, even through our toughest times. To follow God, we need to work hard on the temptations in our lives; to give our vulnerability to God and know that God will help guide us to do good things. During this season of Lent, let us face our vulnerability, and pray for guidance through each of our decisions. God loves each of us and with God’s guidance will help deliver us to a more fulfilled life.

Megan Neveau

Edgewood College, B.S., 2015

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 21

Jeremiah 31:31-34. *The days are coming, says our God, when I will make a new covenant...I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts...*

In reflecting on these scriptures and its relevance to what we see today, I keep coming back to the words “the day is coming.” In a time where uncertainty and hate are taking up a lot of space, these words remind me that trouble does not last always. The day is coming. The day is coming where love will reign supreme above all. The day of truth and peace is coming. The night will end. I look forward to the day of newness, grace and mercy, and I will hold on to the hope of a new day.

Bobbie Briggs

Undergraduate Admissions Counselor

MONDAY, MARCH 22

John 8: 1-11. *Then Jesus straightened up and 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.”*

As we reflect upon this Lenten season, we should challenge ourselves to remember that none of us is perfect, yet we are still loved and treasured in the eyes of God. Since God is forgiving of our repentant sins, so should we be forgiving of each other, and remember that we are all imperfect beings, deserving of forgiveness without judgement. In this year of great hope, we should each work harder to not only forgive but to accept the faults of others as being with pure intention despite unintended outcomes.

Victoria Palmisano

Associate Dean, Business, Communication, and Innovation

TUESDAY, MARCH 23

Numbers 21:4-9. *But with their patience worn out by the journey, the people complained against God and Moses.*

This is a difficult reading, but one in which it is fairly easy to relate to the emotional experience of the children of Israel. It’s easy for me to see myself among those whose patience is worn out by the journey, tempted to join the complainers. As with every Lenten journey, we are called to accompany Jesus into the desert, preparing ourselves for the rediscovery that the stone has been rolled away and the tomb is empty. And here in the fifth week, this Lenten

journey can seem particularly long, especially coming on the heels of the global pandemic. It is tempting to fall into self-pity and rationalization of our complaints. Today, let's remember: just yesterday the daily light outlasted the darkness for the first time since September, the promise of the resurrection is less than two weeks away, and we have every reason to be thankful.

Andrew Manion

President, Edgewood College

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95. *For behold our God, whom we worship, is able to rescue us from the oven of burning fire and to free us from your hands, O king. But even if he will not, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not worship your gods, nor adore the gold statue, which you have raised up.*

We can imagine the enormous pressure on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to compromise. Everything in front of them – the king, the furnace, the music, their compatriots, their competitors – all of it conspired to convince them to compromise. Yet God was more real to them than any of those things. Just like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego the world entices us with power, fame, honor, and money... none of which are lasting. Our response should be the same as them: We will trust in God whether blessing or hardship. During 2020 did you find yourself trusting God more and yourself less? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not promised a miracle, and neither did they ask for one, or expect one. They knew whether God saved them from the flames or it was their time, their business was to be loyal to God and put God first in their lives.

Bethany Brewster

Head Men's/Women's Cross Country Coach, Head Men's/Women's Track and Field Coach

THURSDAY, MARCH 25

Luke 1: 26-38. *Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."*

Upon reading this sentence I felt as though it was a reminder. Much like the saying, "Man plans, and God smiles," this sentence reminded me that God has a plan for our lives. Today more than ever, I think that it is easy to get caught up in all of the stress and pressure of everyday life. Getting caught up in this way can affect many elements of our lives. Therefore, it is important to remember to slow down, take a breath, and reflect on phrases or sentences like this one. Such phrases and sentences can reassure us that everything will turn out

because God has carefully developed a plan for each of us. Even if God's plan entails things that we never thought we would do or be, with just a little faith we can work to trust God and carry out God's plan just as Mary did.

Emily Vosberg

Elementary Education and Spanish major, ESL and Special Education minor

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

Psalm 18:2-7. *The breakers of death surged round about me, the destroying floods overwhelmed me; In my distress I called upon God and cried out to my God; from God's temple God heard my voice, and my cry reached God's ears.*

It's all falling apart. Everything. Again. Nothing new here, eh? Death, flood, destruction. Totally hopeless. Then, the Cosmic Phone Call. And She picks up!

John Elliott

Librarian, Head of Technical Services

SATURDAY, MARCH 27

Ezekiel 37:21-28. *...I will make with them a covenant of peace.*

Despite the end of 2020, times are still uncertain, so it's very important to remember that there's no rainbow without a storm. Lately, I've been feeling that there are a lot of things happening around me. I feel like there's chaos and noise, and it's mostly caused by things I don't have any control over. However, this phrase is a great reminder that there will be peace eventually, that God doesn't forget about us and is always there to give us collective peace. God wants us to be a covenant of peace, therefore God will bring that peace to us and it will be like the rainbow after the storm.

Maria Chacin

Sophomore, Communication Studies major, Graphic Design minor

HOLY WEEK – PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 28

Isaiah 50:4-7. *Morning after morning God opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back.*

The Lord is always here for us. God will not make fun of us or make us feel bad. In times of hardship God will not bring shame, but will guide us, giving us the strength to move forward. We need to open our ears and listen to what God

has to say. We cannot turn our back when times get hard. When our lives seem hopeless we need to stop and listen; God will give us hope. Our lives can get so busy that we forget that God is always with us. If we stop and open our ears we will hear God, we will learn to trust God. God knows where we are going to end up in our lives. We need to trust God and not do everything on our own. Life will get a little easier as soon as we do.

Christy Heintz

Edgewood College B.S., 2010

HOLY WEEK – MONDAY, MARCH 29

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.*

God speaks, ...he [Jesus] shall bring justice to the nation. God speaks to each one of us. We are challenged to accept a task, be it heavy or light, pleasurable or difficult, one time or ongoing but one that brings about justice. What shall it be: working for peace, or educating for justice or restoring health to the earth? The list is long. Add to it. You/we are Christ in the world and to all peoples. It is time to join the throngs of those who are a light for the nations.” Choose! Work for justice.

Virginia Pfluger

O.P.

HOLY WEEK – TUESDAY, MARCH 30

Isaiah 49:1-6. *The Lord called me from birth, from my mother’s womb God gave me my name. God made of me a sharp-edged sword and concealed me in the shadow of God’s arm...Though I thought I had toiled in vain...yet my reward is with God...*

In reading and reflecting on this text, I am struck by Isaiah’s revelation. Before his birth, he says he was chosen by God, given weapons and concealment, and toiled tirelessly in vain. There is certainly an element of disappointment in his words. Yet, he continues to indicate that wonderful rewards are to be found in God. The essence of each person’s life seems to be lived out in the manner that Isaiah describes. Though we are all blessed with different talents and opportunities, and we often examine our efforts and find them lacking, we have faith that these efforts will please God and

our fellow humans. Isaiah reinforces the faith that includes the knowledge that rewards and recompense are with God, rather than in prestige, power, and wealth—regardless of our station in life.

Bob Reif

Professor Emeritus, School of Education

HOLY WEEK - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

Matthew 26:14-25. *He who has dipped his hand into the dish with me is the one who will betray me. The Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to the one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that person to have never been born.*

Judas's betrayal of Jesus has led me to reflect on the recent attempted coup at the nation's Capital. Many are arguing that President Trump betrayed our democracy both by inciting the violence and by calling fraudulent a perfectly fair and free election. His betrayal goes even deeper than this, though, to the very idea of equality, an ideal without which democracy itself makes no sense. He has praised and endorsed white supremacist groups, dismissed women out of hand with sexist language, and he and his administration have worked hard to undo civil rights gains for people of color, women, gays and lesbians, trans and gender non-conforming citizens. Each of these behaviors embraces inequality as its ideal and that is a betrayal of the very ideal at the heart of democracy. As Lent comes to an end, is it possible that "we" have betrayed our friends, our neighbors, our ideals? Has this season of renewal strengthened our commitment to search for truth and to help create a more inclusive, egalitarian, compassionate, and sustainable world?

Lisa King

Associate Professor, Philosophy, Co-Director of Women's and Gender Studies

& John Leonard,

Professor of Religious Studies, Interim VP for Mission, Values and Inclusion

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 1

John 13:1-15. *Jesus said to him, "Whoever has bathed has no need except to have their feet washed, for they are clean all over; so you are clean, but not all."*

Just as a dusty, dirt road makes the disciple's feet dirty, we may find our feet "full of grime" as we move about our days. We can take a daily or weekly bath through

self-evaluation, asking for forgiveness, and making goals or aspirations to better oneself. After bathing in self-awareness, we can choose to open ourselves to God, who senses and finds the places we may not know how to reach or cleanse. God's example of washing another's feet demonstrates how we can also meet our friends in their travels, bending close to heal and care for them.

MJ Kunz

Senior, Nursing major, Psychology minor

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9. *Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered...*

Good Friday, a day of holding suffering. As a child I would suffer when punished for my bad attitude or behavior. I find it interesting looking back that the scripture I was asked to reflect on was "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." (John 14:6). Ok, be kind, helpful, forgive and love. A good first step, but I always wondered about the "How To." Today's reading gives insight to the "How To." Jesus in his suffering learned obedience, to listen deeply. Suffering is hard. The personal denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance is overwhelming. Jesus leads by example. In his suffering Jesus continued to listen to the will of God and was transformed. Joan Chittister explains that "Our task is to be obedient all our lives to the Will of God [which is Love] for the world." When we learn to listen with dignity to one another we will transform the world!

Michelle Horton

Associate, Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 3

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.*

Currently, we live in a time of great uncertainty and divisiveness. We are in the midst of a pandemic. Unemployment soars. Social, racial, and political tensions abound. Subsequently, it is easy to become anxious or discouraged.

That is where the truth of this psalm can refresh and comfort us. This psalm speaks of the abundant provision of a loving God. A God who created all things, is in control, and is invested in all of creation and in each of us. Elsewhere in scripture, the Lord promises to provide for all our needs and to provide grace to weather whatever storm or circumstance comes our way. We need only to turn to God in prayer and trust. Easter epitomizes the extent of this love and provision...the suffering and death of God's only son so that we can have eternal life and be co-heirs with Christ (Rm 8:14-16). What joy! Let us rejoice.

Debbie Sharp

Lecturer, Biological Sciences

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 4

Mark 16: 1-7. *When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go and anoint him. Very early when the sun had risen, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb. They were saying to one another, "Who will roll back the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back; it was very large. On entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were utterly amazed. He said to them, "Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Behold, the place where they laid him. But go and tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you.'"*

Mark's narrative encapsulates the Christian message and provides our marching orders: Jesus died but has also risen; he goes before us. We are to follow. As the angel delivers it, the core of the message remains stark and startling. For believers it is also a bulwark against any evil. Not even death can prevail over Jesus. Furthermore, the angel calls us to action. We're not asked if we're adequate to the call, just to get going. We're not asked to be the savior, just to follow him.

Winifred Morgan

O.P., Professor Emerita of English

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

Edgewood College

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