

REFLECTION FOR THE 5TH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Psalm 51)

Lent, the period of reflection and renewal, gives us the opportunity to focus on our connection to God. As it happens, this Lent we are in an unprecedented time of pandemic. Many of us are living in isolation, or working in circumstances of greater danger than we may ever have imagined for our present day. Perhaps it might help to focus on the themes that Lent offers for our reflection. We begin the Great Fast with forgiveness, recalling the parable of the Prodigal. We forgive each other, as we should. But what a good time to look at ourselves: dare I open myself to myself?

God is forgiveness.

For what might I want to be forgiven?

It is a truism that a bully is probably insecure; an angry person is intrinsically unhappy; a judgemental person harbours deep guilt . . .

Might I be carrying a darkness within me, one I have buried so well I can pretend it isn't there? It's not there until it jumps out in anger, judgement, or unkindness towards another? Perhaps we can even blame our response on the other?

Lent is the liturgical time to search our souls, as it were. Is there, past or present, a hurt, resentment, an action or thought I have regretted? Perhaps it haunts me? Perhaps I've not admitted it is there?

Lent reminds us that whatever might unsettle me, I can confidently rest in God's unlimited forgiveness and love. God does not condemn my failings, my weakness. It is through our Faith that we can forgive ourselves. Trusting God's infinite Love, I can try to face my inner doubts about myself, and let go of fear. We are loved. I am loved. Accepting this can make our souls lighter. Accepting my shortcomings and feeling gratitude for goodness, gives me the grace to find contentment in myself. When I can accept and love myself, it is so much easier for me to accept and love others.

Let this global viral threat compel us towards greater unity with all Creation; may it compel me to be kind to myself so that I may be kind to those around me.
May each of us find peace, and create it in the world.

SCRIPTURAL READINGS FOR THE 5TH WEEK:

Genesis 13:12-22:18

Isaiah 37-45:17

Proverbs 14:27-18:5

Saturday

Hebrews ch. 9

Mark 8: 27-31

Luke 10: 38-42; 11 27-28