

# Lenten Reflections

images, prayers, reflections for our 40 days of journey

## Day 1 Reflection by Pastor Yena Hwang

I like the quiet, reflective nature of lent.

I like the non-glitzy, contemplative season of lent.

Forty days of active waiting. forty days of renewal and recommitment.

Forty days until the Resurrection.

Unlike the festive and colorful season of Advent, Lent brings different color to our Spiritual practices.

There is much talk of sin, repentance, and the practice of giving up something you like and participating in the suffering of Jesus.

Yet, I like lent, because it is *a season that connects our physical bodies with our spiritual selves.*

Lent began with sign of ashes - an ancient sign that speaks of the frail and uncertainty of human life, a sign that reminds us that we are from dust...going back to dust, a sign that reminds us that we are God's beloved people, so loved that God's own son came to live for us, die for us, and resurrect for us. If you have not thought about this season in a positive light, I want to invite you to think about this season in a different light. I invite you to participate in a mindful Lenten journey towards Easter. I invite you to spend some time each day, praying for our church, community, country, and the world that need renewal and the power of resurrection to cover over all our brokenness.

## Day 2 Reflection from Elder Brad Pontz

The season of Lent traditionally is a time of abstinence and self-denial, with the goal of these actions being to allow us to develop a deeper relationship with Christ. In some previous years I have attempted to give up some favorite food or activity with varying success, and the end point of improving my faith saw corresponding results. This year my plan is not to give up a specific pleasure, but rather to temporarily give up the "business"

### Day #3 HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among  
women, and blessed is  
the fruit of thy womb,  
Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of  
God, pray for us sinners,  
now, and at the hour of our  
death. Amen.

### DAY #4 ACT OF CONTRITION

O MY GOD, I AM HEARTILY SORRY FOR HAVING  
OFFENDED THEE, AND I DETEST ALL MY SINS  
BECAUSE I DREAD THE LOSS OF HEAVEN AND THE  
PAINS OF HELL; BUT MOST OF ALL, BECAUSE THEY  
OFFEND THEE, MY GOD, WHO ART ALL-GOOD AND  
DESERVING OF ALL MY LOVE. I FIRMLY RESOLVE,  
WITH THE HELP OF THY GRACE, TO CONFESS MY  
SINS, TO DO PENANCE, AND TO AMEND MY LIFE.  
AMEN.

### What is Lent?

Lent is a season of the year leading up to Easter. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, Lent lasts for 40 days, not counting the Sundays. grow closer to God.



### Why Ashes?

Ashes are a sign of mortality and repentance, we mark our foreheads with ashes to symbolize our penitent hearts. We are confessing our sins and asking for forgiveness with this symbolic act.

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of life that can interfere with my relationship with Christ more than eating pizza can. So often we are caught up in the daily demands of work, family, managing bills, schedules, and seemingly unending commitments. Most of these activities are necessary and well-intentioned, but if we allow them to fill our schedule to the exclusion of spiritual reflection, in total they can become addictive and an easy way to escape nurturing our faith. Of course it is not practical to stay home from work, fail to pay bills, etc. for forty days. My more realistic approach is to take ten minutes every day and remove myself from my daily schedule, which can be demanding but also provides some comfort in its predictability and often low degree of risk. During this admittedly brief time each day, I will hope to reflect on my faith, my relationship with Christ and God, in a way that is actually riskier than my earthly routine, but with the potential for far greater rewards.

### Day #3, 4, and 5 are Catholic prayers from Associate Director of Music Erin Sanzero

Erin writes, "Lent really brings out my Catholic background, so I have to offer up the Hail Mary and the Act of Contrition to guide us through this season. The second version of the act of contrition isn't one I say personally, but this version may lend itself better for the purposes here at FPC." (See boxes above)

#### Day #5 An Act of Contrition 2

Forgive me my sins, O Lord, forgive me my sins;  
 the sins of my youth, the sins of my age, the sins of my soul,  
 the sins of my body; my idle sins, my serious voluntary sins;  
 the sins I know, the sins I do not know; the sins I have concealed for  
 so long,  
 and which are now hidden from my memory.  
 I am truly sorry for every sin, mortal and venial,  
 for all the sins of my childhood up to the present hour.  
 I know my sins have wounded Thy Tender Heart,  
 O My Savior, let me be freed from the bonds of evil through  
 the most bitter Passion of My Redeemer. Amen.  
 O My Jesus, forget and forgive what I have been. Amen.

#### Day #6 A Prayer Submitted by Deacon Tracey Moss

**Heavenly Father,  
 I know that I do not have your  
 patience, mercy, and love.  
 Please show your love through  
 me,  
 in some small way, today, and  
 everyday, here after.  
 In your son, Jesus Christ's name  
 I pray. Amen**



If you have questions or if you like to participate by submitting your own prayers, reflections, or images, please email it to: [yena@fairfaxpresby.com](mailto:yena@fairfaxpresby.com)

#### How do I participate?

You can use this weekly Lenten reflection guide and follow along, setting aside intentional time to pray. You can sign up to do some acts of service in the community, doing services that make a difference in your community. You can participate in "Walk to Jerusalem" - where we as a community keep track of miles walked during Lent and compile it together. You can also practice any number of traditional disciplines of the church, like fasting, abstaining from certain foods or activities. There is no one "right" way to "do" lent. What is important: **your intentions.**