



Monday, March 3, 2014

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 32

This psalm is known as one of the “penitential psalms” because of its focus on God’s forgiveness of our sin. The psalmist emphasizes the importance of confessing our sin to God and asking for forgiveness and going to God in prayer with our needs. The psalmist ends with joyful assurance that “steadfast love surrounds all those who trust in the Lord”.

REFLECT-

- Sometimes we may feel that since God already knows our heart, our thoughts and our deeds, what purpose is there in confessing our sin to God? The purpose is for us to come to God with a repentant and humble heart and receive God’s grace and mercy with joy. What sin do you need to confess to God today?

PRAY-

Lord, I confess my sin to you and ask for your mercy. Make me whole and clean once more so that I may serve you faithfully. Amen.

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

READ- Old Testament: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

In the season of Lent, which begins tomorrow on Ash Wednesday, we are challenged to spend those 40 days reflecting on the human condition and our relationship with God. Original human sin and our alienation from God because of our disobedience described in this passage made it necessary for the Second Adam – Jesus - to come and die in order to reconcile us to God.

REFLECT-

- What are the temptations that call out to you like forbidden fruit? Who or what are the “snakes” who encourage you to sin and help you rationalize your behavior?

PRAY-

Creator God, when I feel tempted, help me to rely on your strength – not my own – to keep my path straight and my choices faithful. Forgive me when I am weak and when I fail. Amen.

Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2014

READ- The Epistle: Romans 5:12-19

Paul here directly compares the sin of “one man” – Adam – to the saving act of grace through one man – Jesus Christ. Just as Adam’s act of disobedience served to separate all humankind from God, Christ’s act of suffering, death and resurrection restored that breach for us all.

REFLECT-

- Sin is anything that causes us to turn away from God. What are the things in your life that create distance between you and God or that interfere with you having a close relationship with God? Look closely at how you spend your time and your money.

PRAY-

Father, help me to see clearly the things in my life which separate me from you and to make changes where they are needed. Amen.

Thursday, March 6, 2014

READ- The Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus was human and experienced temptation, just as we do. However, he had a very clear sense of his purpose and of God’s will for his life and responded to the devil’s offers with the words of scripture found in Deuteronomy. Even in his weakened physical state, he remained faithful to God’s purpose.

REFLECT-

- Temptation often comes to us when we are weak and vulnerable. When we are tired, hungry, lonely, sick or in some kind of pain, that is when the tempter is most effective, offering solutions to our problems which are not in God’s will for us. Where are you most vulnerable to temptation right now?

PRAY-

O God, I am weak and often give in to temptation. In those moments of weakness, give me the power of your Spirit to choose wisely. Amen.

Friday, March 7, 2014

ACT-

Focus Verse: Psalm 32:11

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

Let today be a time of rejoicing for you. Take some time and write down all the ways in which God has guided your life and has shown you mercy and gracious love. Think of times in which you made a very bad choice or took the wrong path. How did God work to redeem that bad choice or get you back headed in the right direction? What great blessings in your life are you taking for granted? Offer your thanksgiving to God for all these things by the way you treat others today. Go out of your way to be kind, generous, encouraging, and loving to everyone you encounter. The gracious love and mercy God gives us is meant to be shared. Reach out to someone who is hurting, weak or vulnerable today and share God’s love through your words and actions. That is true righteousness.