



Stumbling Into Grace

FOLLOWING JESUS IN THE WAY OF THE CROSS

ACP Lenten Journey 2010



Stumbling Into Grace

I am being driven forward
Into an unknown land.
The pass grows steeper,
The air colder and sharper.
A wind from my unknown goal
Stirs the strings
Of expectation.

Still the question:
Shall I ever get there?
There where life resounds,
A clear pure note
In the silence.

Dag Hammarskjöld

God of all roads
and ways
remind me
at every turn
that I am
homeward bound
and can not truly rest
until I find my home
in you.

Lent 2010

Originally, Lent was the 40 day preparation
for new converts who would be baptized on Easter Sunday.
Over time, Lent became a season for all Christians
to remember their baptism.

To remember that we have been crucified with Christ
to be buried with Christ
into death
In the hope of being raised with Christ
into Everlasting Life.

This Lent, we are all invited to follow Jesus on the way of the cross
the intersection of grace and weakness
where love is stronger than death.



What
shall
I
leave behind?

Confession & Fasting

Sin for a start — and the burden of guilt.

Lent is a season to confess our sins and short-comings to the Lord and then leave them behind. This is why Lent is not only called a “penitential” season (which means sorrow for our sins) but also a “joyful” season, as we experience the freedom of God’s forgiveness.

Lent is also a season for leaving behind our habits of “self-comfort” and trying a new practice of “Christ’s comfort”. Most of us can think of at least one habit that we have to self-medicate. We reach for a glass of wine — or the remote control — or the telephone for a gossip session — rather than seeking rest and comfort from God. One reason for fasting in Lent is to deny self-comfort to receive grace.

Penitence and Fasting leave sin and self-indulgence behind in order to make space for the grace of God to restore and comfort us through Jesus Christ.

How
do
I
walk
this way?



Following Jesus ...

Daily Begin Again

What can I change in my nightly routine to make 10 minutes of space for the grace of confession & forgiveness?

Fasting: making room for God's comfort

What is one habit, or pleasure that I use to seek physical comfort that I will set aside for 6 weeks?

How will I intentionally turn to Jesus for comfort when I am craving this thing?

Lent is also a time to turn my attention to others who need the comfort and care of God (remembering the poor). This Lent, I will use the craving for the things I've given up as a reminder to pray God's care and comfort for this person / people group _____.

Many give the money saved from fasting to the poor as well.



What
shall
I
take up?

Scripture & Prayer

Bible Reading and Prayer sustain us on the way of the cross during Lent.

Reading the Bible feeds our souls, giving nutrients that the Holy Spirit can direct to the places in our lives that need energy and restoration.

Prayer keeps us hydrated with Jesus Christ, the living water.

We need both for the long pilgrimage of Lent.

Reading our Bible and prayer every day in Lent creates a space for God's grace to humble us where we are dangerously proud and encourage us when we are weary or stumble in the way.

How
do
I
pray along
this way?



Following Jesus ...

Here is a daily pattern of prayer that may be helpful:

Read Psalm 51 *or* Psalm 130

Daily Bible Reading (see weekly bulletins)

Reflect on the Reading

One way is to read the passage again 2—3 times until one verse or word seems to stand out, and then prayerfully reflect on what that word or phrase means in the story of the Bible, and then also what it means to the story of your life.

Prayers for others and Lord's prayer

Silence

Closing prayer

Merciful God,
May our fasting be hunger for You; our alms, a making of peace; our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts. All that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus, for in his cross you proclaim your love for ever and ever.



Why
should
I
follow?

Stumbling into Joy

“As we begin it,
as we make the first step
into the ‘bright sadness’ of Lent,
we see
— far, far away
— the destination.

It is the joy of Easter,
it is the entrance into the glory
of the Kingdom.

And it is this vision,
the foretaste of Easter,
that makes Lent’s sadness bright
and our lenten effort
a ‘spiritual spring’.”

— Alexander Schmemmann

**fix your gaze on Jesus
who for the sake of the joy
that was set before him
endured the cross,
disregarding its shame,
and has taken his seat at the right hand
of the throne of God.**

The letter to the Hebrews, 12:2