

2021 Lenten Reflections



Sisters of the Presentation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
In Joyful Service

February 17, 2021 Ash Wednesday

TIME TO REVISIT THE WELL

Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God. For gracious and merciful is our God. Joel 2:13.

It is Ash Wednesday and once again we ritualize the remembrance of our humanness as we wear ashes and cross the threshold into Lent.

We had a well on our farm when I was growing up. It had special value since it was our source of soft water, water that cleansed well, treating skin and hair tenderly. The soft water was gift from above, was carefully ushered into the well; treasured and used sparingly.

Of course more than rain water found its way into our well. So once a year the well was emptied and cleansed, a major undertaking. My dad spent considerable time down there in the darkness, scraping and scrubbing and sending up buckets of refuse.

Lent is like that annual restoration of the well. Once a year we are urged to go into the well of our hearts to renew and make ready for 'gifts from above'. Get at those crusty habits that have grabbed onto the walls; and don't miss that dark sludge hidden in the northeast corner. When Easter comes we want to have our well ready for the refreshing waters of Resurrection and Pentecost's gifts of the Spirit.

In some ways the past year of COVID may have seemed like Lent. Our values called for sacrifice, fasting from comforts and social gatherings, and we sputtered under those soggy masks. Some of us undoubtedly experienced our own personal journey through the Red Sea with walls of threat on both sides, and the army of COVID closing in on us from behind. Covid called forth from us prayer, fasting and almsgiving, and we were there!

This year Lent might be a time to contemplate the ways Jesus' Spirit kept us going; embracing us when we felt overwhelmed; giving us hope and strength for one more day. Then, some days may have overcome us with darkness such that Jesus' presence and embrace were obscured, even misread. Yet our faith and our values [maybe our team] kept us going!

As we continue this unusual year, Lent could well include some time spent in quiet, worshipful gratitude...a revisit to the well, sitting in the dark with the softness of that special water from above that was there all the time, even when we could not feel it washing over us.
And so we pray.

God of the rain, Breath of our breath, wash us tenderly through this Lent.

Light our way as we look around the walls of our hearts that we may ready ourselves once more. Gentle us as we go since it has been a trying year.

And thank you for loving us and holding us together as we do our best to walk your love throughout our homes and the marketplace .

Sister Lynn Marie Welbig, PBVM