

Lent 2020: Steps Toward an Easter Morning

As you consider Lent and Easter this year we offer a prayer for each week. Try this: Read the prayer each morning. Carry it with you through the day to read at lunch, or during a break or resting. Wrap yourself in these thoughts as your wardrobe, your garment for the day. Allow this new garment to change your day. Write down your thoughts. Return to these thoughts at the day's end. Through consistent use you will become more comfortable with this practice and you will find yourself on *Steps toward an Easter Morning*.

—Terry Ewing, Vice President of Advancement

Ash Wednesday, February 26

My Sweet Lord, I break into this new day, claiming the Hope of Good Beginnings. Sounds of Life, Sounds of Joy, Sounds of Praise reach my ears though an open door. My head turns from night to day. My head turns from fear to freedom. My face is lit by the Holy Promise. My face is turned toward this One who comes. Alleluia breaks, crashing upon my rocky shore! Alleluia rings in fullness 'round my empty world! Alleluia tips the balance and raises peace! Alleluia cuts a path 'cross every limit! Alleluia arrives this day! Thank God! Amen.

March 1-7

Most Loving God, the sleepless hours crumble away and I spend precious minutes listening to the sound of footsteps stumbling along unnamed roads. These sounds do not restore. These sounds do not renew. These sounds do not redeem. O God, I recognize these sounds, as mine. I see the imprint of these faltering steps, as mine. Pick me up, Lord! Turn my eyes, Lord! O Lord, lean in upon my ear and whisper, "This is the way." Hear my prayer, Amen.

March 8-14

Most Loving God, I try once more. I am breathing deep on a breathless day, in the morning sun, Dear Friend. Today, I cannot hide myself from your world of wonder and blessing. Torn away from the dirty rags I have called shelter, a swirling chorus is all around, singing "Forgiveness!" into my heart, chanting "Wonder!" into my head and proclaiming "Hope!" upon my spirit. Loving God, as this One passes by, so I follow and I try once more. By His Name, Amen.

March 15-21

Holy Companion, once more a gracious hand reaches across what is broken, pressing a balm deep into my aching spirit and offering a comfort I have missed so much. In the middle of these sacred weeks, in the middle of this Way unfolding before us, in the middle of my jumbled words may I be drawn closer, may I find a turn on my twisting road toward a wholeness I never knew. Here in the middle of Life, O God. Amen.

March 22-28

Holy and Gracious One, deep in the darkness, deep among the clatter and rattle of passing days, deeper still within my fearful heart, the Good News Song seems to be sailing away to other ears, drifting down a faraway hall to those who can still hear. O God, does the wonder of these days, these Holy Days simply fade? Do we turn 'round and 'round, marking time without thought? If a darkness falls upon us this day, it is the heavy curtain of our own misgivings, a darkness draped across our lives. Only Love will tear it aside. We hold our breath, O God, until that time. Amen.

March 29-April 4

Gracious Friend, in this silent place, holding still and holding close, among silent others, with silent dreams and silent words, praying in this silent place: "Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, forgive me. Christ, forgive me. O God, may your Peace fill my heart, once more." Hear now, our Amen.

April 5-11

God of Mercy, Love has taken back the day and it will not be returned. One life given. One life in sacrifice. One life poured upon all those near. The hand is taken back from the whip. The frozen scowl is turned toward the wall.

Cruel words are erased and scraped from our tongues. This Love, in this One, will find a way through fear. This Love will find a way beyond our angry borders. This Love will find a way into our hearts. May it be so, O God, Amen.

Easter Sunday, April 12

Gracious God, Gentle Lord, Fresh Spirit of this Bright Day, I have been discovered! I can no longer hide. When self-doubt has robbed me of strength, on THIS Day I am restored. When those shadowy ghosts of past mistake and misstep heap a fog upon my view, on THIS Day I am renewed. When all that is, all that was, each moment, each beat, every loss, every joy, the brokenness, the wastefulness, the smallest bit of emptiness and the greatest portion of regret—when all this life is woven and bound together, Beloved Friend, on THIS Day I am raised above. Rising up, dusted off and shined up new, I am re-made! In the Name of the One who found us all, on this day of Risen Hope and Risen Life. Alleluia Amen!