



Leaning Into the Heart of the Holy

2016 Lenten Devotions

Holy Saturday
March 26, 2016

By Kathie Hoyle Masten

I recently became a member of a local fitness program called Training for Warriors. Part of the program is the idea that we can all be warriors by taking responsibility for our own health, fitness, and overall well-being. When I looked up the definition of a warrior, Dictionary.com stated that a warrior is a person who shows or has shown great vigor, courage, or aggressiveness. Often the daily workouts as part of the program can be very intense, as you can imagine with names like The Hurricane or Speed Strength. To muster up the energy to get through a workout, I often have to 'dig deep' and find my inner warrior to press on, push forward, and just do my best to get through the last set of exercises or complete the final sprint, even though I am out of breath and feel as if I will never finish.

I am learning in my walk of faith that to be a warrior in my day-to-day life is quite different than being a warrior in the gym. I used to power through my days with long 'to-do' lists that I proudly checked off as each item was completed, slowing down only when it was time for bed. When faced with a problem, I would occupy my mind by pondering over numerous options on how best I could tackle the issue at hand and hopefully resolve it in a timely manner. Although my days are still jam-packed with various responsibilities, I have discovered that the warrior approach to daily living leaves me rather exhausted rather than being filled with joyful energy and a sense peace. As I practice leaning more into the heart of the Holy through daily devotions, prayer, and weekly worship, I more readily let go of my warrior stance and allow God to fight my battles for me. Yet, this is not easy! Trusting that God is present in my everyday life, that He does care about the small challenges I face as well as the mammoth ones, and believing that He not only wants to fight my battles for me, but will do so with love and wisdom far greater than my own is difficult some days. I'm learning little by little to let Him be my warrior.

The lyrics in Lauren Daigle's song *Trust in You* capture this struggle. She sings, "I've tried to win this war, and I confess, my hands are weary, I need Your rest. Mighty Warrior, King of the fight, no matter what I face, You're by my side. When You don't move the mountains I'm needing You to move, when You don't part the waters I wish I could walk through, when You don't give the answers as I cry out to You, I will trust, I will trust, I will trust in You.

I'm growing in my warrior courage as I lean into Him and He lifts me up with only the extraordinary strength that God manifests. When I face a final set of crunches at the end of a grueling workout or when I confront challenges in my life and I'm sure that I just can't do any more, God leans in to me and says, "Yes you can, with my help, you've got this!"

The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. Therefore my heart exults, and with my song, I shall thank Him. –Psalm 28:7

How It All Ends: A Poem for Holy Saturday
By Jen Rose Yokel

She used to say she loved
those TV movies about Jesus,
but hated the crucifixion scene

even though it was toned down
in the grains of 1970s film,
palatable to the eyes of those
eating dinner in front of
a flickering screen.

This is us, now, knowing
how it all ends, knowing
in three days the lungs of God
would reinflate.

Knowing the ending, could I
ever comprehend the blackness,
ever imagine the darkest
Saturday in history?

A King's body shrouded in spices
and linen lay withering
behind stone,

The budding bloom of salvation,
crushed
careless
trod by
His creation.

Oh my God

today the sun scatters clouds
the sun that once turned away
at your final earthly breath
as the lion lay shorn and still.

May I never forget
the darkest day of history,
spring stopped, waiting,
pressing her face
at the tomb's door.

Prayer:

We remember, O God, the grief of the disciples when Jesus died. Lead us beyond our fear of death to the joyful knowledge of eternal life in the One who lives forever. Amen.

From A New Zealand Prayer Book

Matthew 27:57-66

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.