

LISTENING ALONGSIDE



ECHOING CHRIST

Lenten Devotions 2017

**Saturday,
March 25, 2017**

A Litany for Lent

From Franciscan Mission Service

We fast from judging others,
but feast on patience.

We fast from apparent differences,
but feast on unity of all life.

We fast from words that pollute,
but feast on words that affirm.

We fast from complaining,
but feast on appreciation.

We fast from bitterness and anger,
but feast on forgiveness and mercy.

We fast from discouragement,
but feast on hope.

We fast from suspicion,
but feast on trust.

We fast from idle gossip,
but feast on purposeful silence.

We fast from problems that overwhelm,
but feast on prayer that strengthens.

Prayer

When the world spins crazy, spins wild and out of control, spins toward rage and hate and violence, spins beyond our wisdom and nearly beyond our faith, When the world spins to chaos as it does now among us... We are glad for sobering roots that provide ballast in the storm. So we thank you for our footage in communities of faith, for many fathers and mothers who have believed and trusted as firm witnesses to us, for their many stories of wonder, awe, and healing... And when we meet you hiddenly, we find the spin not so unnerving, because from you the world again has a chance for life and sense and wholeness. We pray midst the spinning, not yet unnerved, but waiting and watching and listening, for you are the truth that contains all our spin. Amen.

–Walter Brueggemann

From *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth*

Isaiah 58:1-12

Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,

to the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet day after day they seek me

and delight to know my ways,

as if they were a nation that practised righteousness

and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;

they ask of me righteous judgements,

they delight to draw near to God.

“Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-day,

and oppress all your workers.

Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight

and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today

will not make your voice heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose,

a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,

and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,

a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

Luke 18:9-14

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."