



Theme artwork by  
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**Lent at Lakeside:  
My Heart as Sanctuary  
My Life as Prayer  
Devotion for Thursday,  
February 15, 2018**

**Where I'm From  
By Jan Richardson**

I am from orange groves  
and old Florida,  
from a house my parents built  
in a field my grandfather gave them.  
Black-eyed Susans grew there in the spring,  
so thick we played hide and seek  
simply by kneeling among them.

I am from a town  
with more cows than people,  
from Judy and from Joe,  
from generations that have grown up  
in one place.

I am from peanut butter and  
honey sandwiches every morning,  
from my grandmothers' kitchens,  
from Thanksgiving feasts in the  
community park,  
from Christmas Eves in the  
white painted church  
among the pine trees.

I am from the dictionary we kept  
by the dinner table  
where we ate words like food,  
from hours and days in libraries,  
from miles of books.  
I am from the path they have made.

I am from solitude and silence,  
from the monks and mystics who lived  
between the choir and the cell,  
from the scribes bent over their books,  
from parchment and paint,  
from ancient ink and from gold  
that turned pages into lamps,  
into light.

I am from women less quiet,  
women of the shout and the stomp,  
testifying wherever they could make  
their voices heard.

I am from Miriam and Mary and Magdalena  
and from women unknown and unnamed,  
women who carried their prayers  
not in books  
but in their blood  
and in their bones,  
women who passed down the sacred stories  
from body to body.

I am from them,  
listening for their voices,  
aching to hear,  
to tell, to cry out,  
to make a way for those  
yet to come.

## Psalm 51:1-17

Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned,  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you are justified in your sentence  
and blameless when you pass judgment.  
Indeed, I was born guilty,  
a sinner when my mother conceived me.

You desire truth in the inward being;  
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.  
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.  
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.  
Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

○ Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.  
For you have no delight in sacrifice;  
if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased.  
The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, ○ God, you will not despise.

**Prayer:**

Thank you, ○ God, for the people and places and experience whence I have come. Thank you as well for the people toward whom I am moving, the places I am going, and the things I will yet do. Thank you, ○ God, for traveling with me today and into the life yet to come. Amen.