



# *Leaning into the Heart of the Holy*

*2016 Lenten Devotions*

Thursday

February 18, 2016

**Attributed to Pope Francis**  
**Submitted by Sheila Martin**

Do you want to fast this Lent?

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope
- Fast from worries and trust in God
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful
- Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to one another
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen

**Excerpt from “A Prayer for Lent,” by Henri Nouwen**

How often have I lived through these weeks without paying much attention to penance, fasting, and prayer? How often have I missed the spiritual fruits of the season without even being aware of it? But how can I ever really celebrate Easter without observing Lent? ...

## **Prayer:**

Righteous God, we are burdened: we do not love you as we should. We forget our dependence on you and do not honor you. Instead of glorifying you, we try to bring ourselves glory.

Righteous God, we are burdened: we do not love others as we should. We hurry through our days and miss opportunities to be your hands and feet. We judge quickly and respond thoughtlessly.

Righteous God, we are burdened: we do not love ourselves as we should. We disparage our appearances, criticize our best efforts, and misuse our bodies.

Righteous God, we are burdened: we are weighed down by the bad things that are done to us. We hold grudges, harbor bad feelings, and believe lies told about us.

Righteous God, we are burdened: we are overwhelmed by sin. You know our pain and suffering. By your wounds we are healed. Take our burdens, we pray, and free us from sin. Amen.

From worship service of First Presbyterian Church of York, PA, February 14, 2016

## **Philippians 3:2-12**

Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate the flesh! For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh— even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.