



**Lent reflection for February 15, 2024**

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A reading from Philippians 3:12-21

“Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us, then, who are mature think this way, and if you think differently about anything, this, too, God will reveal to you. Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.

Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.”

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Today's Reflection is by Peter Saghir

I find Paul's humility in this passage to be very comforting, especially for a sinner like me. For many years I did not feel comfortable or welcome in the church because I was not the “perfect” Christian. I had this image of the self-righteous priest or parishioner looking at me with judgment if I didn't pray the right way ... judgment if I questioned my faith or felt angry toward God ... judgment if I cursed ... if I got drunk ... judgment if I missed church or broke one of the 10 Commandments ... the list could go on. I felt I was not the perfect Christian but the perfect sinner and it was those notions that kept me from church for many years. It did not feel like a place where I could bring my whole self, broken pieces and all. Truth be told, no priest or parishioner ever reprimanded me for doing those things, but somehow I formed this idea that there was no

room in the pews for those who were less than perfect. Maybe it is because I rarely, if ever, heard those religious people express such humility as Paul does to the Phillipians. Paul recognizes that he is a work in progress, that he is not perfect. Reading this passage gives me the confidence and courage to bring my broken, imperfect, Christian self to Church. Reading this passage reminds me that this is a journey “toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.” It is not easy living a Christian life in a secular world but the recognition that this is a journey gives me the comfort to return to the pew each Sunday as an imperfect Christian.

Another section of this passage that spoke to me was Paul reminding us to “observe those who live according to the example you have in us.” One of the best examples for me in living the Christian life is my mom. My mom is not perfect, but she is patient. She is empathetic. She is humble and lives a Christ centered life as an imperfect human. It is her faithfulness in Christ despite her imperfections that serve as an example to me as to how to live a Christ centered life.



Peter is a warden at Holy Apostles and serves on the Vestry. He lives in Windsor Terrace with his wife Alexandra and children Luke and Scarlett. Peter enjoys gardening, woodworking, and sketching in his free time.