



Lent reflection for March 15, 2025

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**Psalm 25: 1-25**

*To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.  
O my God, in you I trust;  
do not let me be put to shame;  
do not let my enemies exult over me.  
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;  
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.  
Make me to know your ways, O Lord;  
teach me your paths.  
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation;  
for you I wait all day long.  
Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,  
for they have been from of old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;  
according to your steadfast love remember me,  
for your goodness' sake, O Lord!  
Good and upright is the Lord;  
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.  
He leads the humble in what is right,  
and teaches the humble his way.  
All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,  
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.*

*For your name's sake, O Lord,  
pardon my guilt, for it is great.  
Who are they that fear the Lord?  
He will teach them the way that they should choose.*

*They will abide in prosperity,  
and their children shall possess the land.  
The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,  
and he makes his covenant known to them.  
My eyes are ever towards the Lord,  
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.  
Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
for I am lonely and afflicted.  
Relieve the troubles of my heart,  
and bring me out of my distress.  
Consider my affliction and my trouble,  
and forgive all my sins.  
Consider how many are my foes,  
and with what violent hatred they hate me.  
O guard my life, and deliver me;  
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.*

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### Today's reflection if from Ellen Correia-Golay:

This psalm is an interesting one for me, as it really focuses on the idea of putting your trust and faith in God to help you with your troubles. This idea, that "with God's help" I can find my way through the difficulties in life, has been a hard concept for me to put into practice. Independence has always been a very important value for me. I am not sure if this is a cultural thing from my New England upbringing or the fact that my parents were feminists, but I was raised to make sure I didn't have to depend on anyone - a man, a neighbor, a friend - for anything. So, for me, the idea that I should actually lean on someone for help, let alone a being I can't actually see or hear, is really challenging.

Another way that relying on God has been challenging for me is that I am not sure exactly what it means to "follow God." We read a lot about God and Jesus in the Bible and associated texts, but in my day-to-day life, if I am facing a modern challenging situation, I am not sure what it means to "follow God" in that moment. I am sure you are all familiar with the bumper stickers that say "What Would Jesus Do?" I often find myself asking myself "What WOULD Jesus do right now???" And I often find that I really don't have an answer.

Depending on others, asking for help, developing a relationship with God - these are all things I am working on. Over Advent I participated in a reflection group at Holy Apostles. At one of the sessions, Mother Kimberlee asked us to imagine what one thing we most needed in the world at that moment and to have a conversation with Jesus about it. I began the reflection time by thinking about how my immediate answer to that question - that I most needed financial stability - was really not that important given the abundance I do have and how it was silly it was that this was my focus. But then another voice in my head said "Well, thrift is a virtue, one that Jesus would likely have supported, so you shouldn't dismiss this desire so quickly as not valuable." As I was going back and forth in my head with myself, it occurred to me finally - was I talking to myself, or was I talking to Jesus? This realization made me wonder if I had been putting the concept of "following God" too high up on a pedestal. Before, I had expected any communication from God would be associated with an opening of the heavens and very profound guidance. After this exercise, it occurred to me that I could "follow God" simply by having conversations in my head with the voice of a kind and understanding friend who can help me navigate the challenges of this world. Perhaps through that exercise, God will speak to me.



Ellen has been attending Holy Apostles with her children since the Spring of 2022. She lives in Kensington with her husband Geddes, sons John and Geddes Jr, and her large rescue dog Honey Marshmallow.