



Lent reflection for March 24, 2025

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Psalm 43: 1-5

*Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause
against an ungodly people;
from those who are deceitful and unjust
deliver me!*

*For you are the God in whom I take refuge;
why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because of the oppression of the enemy?*

*O send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling.*

*Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy;
and I will praise you with the harp,
O God, my God.*

*Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.*

Today's reflection if from Erin McNaughton:

Last week I learned that a colleague had left the firm. We weren't particularly close, but I'd gotten to know her better last year at a company event and was looking forward to reconnecting at our gathering in April. I am inspired by her story and optimism. I reached out to her closest colleague to make sure Joi had left on her own terms.

Kristen, Joi's colleague, is kind. We have known each other at least 20 years. We have both experienced the faceless corporate machine as well as the possibility of business with compassion; for both of us compassionate business is always the hope and goal.

Kristen was a little guarded at first. I asked the direct question "did Joi leave on her own terms?". My fear... and I have been very much in a state of fear... was that she "was pursuing other opportunities "... corporate speak for fired. At the end of our conversation, Kristen said "we are not meant for capitalism. You and I are too sensitive for this corporate world."

Oh!

Everything inside me went silent. I took a deep breath and felt those words.

“... send out your light and your truth let them lead me...”

This place I choose to go to most days of my life, or invite in to my living room via a tiny screen, can feel ungodly and oppressive. Lately, there are more comments celebrating Gordon Gecko, men cutting women off mid sentence or reconvening with the guys, people are clearly assessing others dress codes and styles. It feels more judgmental, less tolerant... fewer people ask the other to the party much less to dance.

“why must I walk about mournfully because of the oppression of the enemy?”

Sigh... I thought we'd grown beyond this. It's like when the memory of dad throwing my Baby Tenderlove in frustration and her leg flying off comes up again in therapy... are we ever done; is this work ever done? No, Erin, it's never “done” it's just a new layer or perspective.

In the turmoil of my mind and heart, it is the compassion of a colleague, or the brilliant song of a tufted titmouse, sharing the spectacle of the Big Dipper and Milky Way on a cold bridge in Connecticut, the thrill of ringing a church bell loudly with a friend, which is the light that helps me reach for faith, that reminds me I am a person of faith, that this temporary incarnation is a spiritual being having a human experience.

Breathe... take another breath... be present in this moment.

When I lose myself in a world of finance bros and homophobes... “Vindicate me oh God and defend my cause against an ungodly people...”

When I feel that I have to hide or to pass under the radar in order to survive, “why must I walk about mournfully because of the oppression of the enemy?”

Kindness, nature, a silly or special moment “... send out your light and your truth let them lead me...”

The light reminds me to BE faithful... use my tools.

Music: Hum edelweiss and repeat the lyrics to our closing song... feel how that uplifts my heart every week.

Pray: Our Father, the Serenity prayer, whatever I recall of the Nicene creed.

Recall that “God loves you like a mother” - tough love, fearless love, cry myself empty love.

These help to create an opening in me for the light to enter, to illuminate the next step ahead of me, leading me to the altar of God... and sometimes for a moment, sometimes several moments strung together, I remember I have faith and can celebrate that sense of refuge.

Breathe in, breathe out... Amen, alleluia



Erin McNaughton currently resides in Windsor Terrace with her sweet pupper Bella who is 13 years young. Erin is grateful for the community and inspiration she has found at Holy Apostles... and seven years after passing through those red doors, she still says yes (mostly) to the Mothers.