

March 7, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Lent



Center for Spiritual Development

MORNING DAWN

By Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own. Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed; Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am!

ISAIAH 58:6-9a

Reflection

This passage from Isaiah 58 provides a wonderful meditation for us if we take each phrase and apply it to our own lives. While we understand fasting from

food, the insights in this reading point to a different kind of fasting. Who are those in our lives that are bound unjustly and how might we untie the thongs of their yoke? In my own life, I've admired those attorneys who work pro-bono and those who seek the release of those unjustly imprisoned. At the same time, it is helpful to bring this home to ourselves by asking what needs to be released and freed within us so we might live the life that God intends for us. What are the bindings that trap us or keep us from being who we are created to be?

The next set of wisdom found in Isaiah calls for feeding the hungry and sheltering the oppressed and those without homes. Taking these words literally, we can grasp their meaning and hopefully use our resources to assist those most in need of food and shelter. We can also ask ourselves: for what do we hunger and where is our spiritual home? If we're not attentive to our spiritual well-being, we might just find ourselves at quite a distance from our Beloved.

The ending of this passage from Isaiah is beautiful and rich with the imagery of the light breaking forth like the dawn. Have you awakened early and sought out the sun arising from behind a mountaintop? It can be a joyful experience of the Lord welcoming you to a new day, and it can be exhilarating and scary at the same time. Try it if you have not done this. Seek out a mountaintop and gaze upon it as the sun rises – it is food for your soul.

Morning Dawn

Awake from your slumber, O child of God, a new day dawns. May your heartbeat quicken as you welcome a morning where you greet your Beloved anew.

Open wide the windows of your heart and allow God's presence to shine forth. Open your eyes and take in the Son/Sun and slow your racing mind to take in this intimate moment.

Feel the warmth of the sun upon you and may this be a reminder to be the light and warmth of God to those you encounter this day. Walk gently into the heartbeat of this new moment of your life and be grateful for all that you have been given.



Scenic View of Mountains During Dawn

Photo by Simon Berger

For Pondering

- Who are the people in your life that are bound unjustly and how might you untie the thongs of their yoke?

- What needs to be released and freed within you to live the life that God intends for you? What are the bonds that trap you or keep you from being who you were created to be?
- For what do you hunger? Where is your spiritual home? Is your spiritual home a place that beckons you? Why or why not? What might need to change to make your spiritual home one of welcome?

For Prayer

O God, may we open our eyes to the needs before us this day.

*May we see and hear with your eyes and ears
in order to be a welcoming and inviting presence
to those we meet this day.*

Let us not turn a blind eye to the needs we see before us.

Amen.

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