

February 23, 2023



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH LENT

Photo by Alan Carrillo from Unsplash

A TREE PLANTED NEAR RUNNING WATER

By Sister Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Today's Reading

Moses said to the people: "Today I have set before you life and prosperity, death and doom. If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I enjoin on you today, loving him, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and decrees, you will live and grow numerous, and the LORD, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to occupy. If, however, you turn away your hearts and will not listen, but are led astray and adore and serve other gods, I tell you now that you will certainly perish; you will not have a long life on the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and occupy. I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and

the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the LORD, your God, heeding his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land that the LORD swore he would give to your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

DEUTERONOMY 30:15-20

Reflection

As the book of Deuteronomy comes to a close, it is the upcoming generations that become the focus. Beginning with Abraham the covenant between Yahweh and the Hebrews is held within the circle of many upcoming generations. This people of the covenant are called to be faithful only to their God and reject humanmade idols of wood and stone. In the ancient world gods were thought to be present within the humanmade figure. Consequently, the gods experienced whatever happened to that object, e.g., kidnapped or destroyed. These figures represented deities who could be manipulated and impacted by human activity. That is not the case with Yahweh who stands apart as powerful creator and sustainer of all.

Most Hebrew Scriptures' references to anger mention it as God's response to Israel's infidelity. Yet God's anger is always balanced by God's love. Notably in this passage, humans are given the power of choice. The climax is the moment of decision which is highlighted by extremes: life and prosperity or death and disaster. Choice remains both a constant question and an awaited response for every generation. Just as choice belongs to the people, so does the consequence of their choice. *I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the LORD, your God, heeding his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land that the LORD swore he would give to your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob [Dt 30:19-20].*



Photo by Sr. Eileen McNerney, CSJ

For Pondering

- What is the “life” God is asking you to choose today?

- What is/are the consequence/s of your choosing “life”?
 - What do you say to God?
-

For Prayer

*God of wonders,
You've given me
the most wonderful
of all gifts ---
the gift of free will.
May my will never deviate,
from your holy Will.
Guide me always,
so that all the choices I make
are good ones ----
in harmony with your Will,
as long as I live.*

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