

Sermon Lent 1C, 2022

March 6, 2022

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Albuquerque, NM

Preacher: Rev. Sylvia Miller-Mutia, Associate Rector

Readings: [https://www.lectionarypage.net/YearC RCL/Lent/CLent1 RCL.html](https://www.lectionarypage.net/YearC/RCL/Lent/CLent1_RCL.html)

Deacon David's Ash Wed Sermon: "Intention"

[start screenshare]

On FB, from the Rev. Alissa Newton (Diocese of Olympia) (mama, wife, priest. geek, reader, musician. curious, playful, loyal. also, pretty big sweet tooth.)

Lent is coming and I want to reach beyond the usual giving up of things/Lent-as-diet-challenge to find Lenten practices that are gentle and life giving. Here's my brainstorm so far...

Lenten Discipline Ideas

- Fast from talking about bodies - other people's or your own. Don't compliment anyone on how they look. Don't tell people about your weight gain or loss plans. Notice how difficult or easy this is.
- Write a prayer for an everyday task or chore and say it whenever you do the chore. A prayer for picking up the socks the dog has dragged into the living room. A prayer for picking up dog poop in the backyard. A prayer for wiping down the counters before the dog licks them. Pray it and mean it. (Puppies are a lot of work.)
- Set a timer and two or three times a day stop, breathe, stretch. Notice your body. Say amen.
- Stop sending/replying to texts and checking email after 8pm at night. Notice and get curious about how this feels.
- Once a week, take a nap. Calendar it.

[stop screenshare]

Lenten Disciplines

- Countercultural
- (Neuroscience) Disciplines of Fasting or Abstinence from certain pleasures Actual INCREASE our capacity to experience joy & pleasure
- Biblically—Practices that enable us to cultivate virtues—patience, humility, compassion, and connection with God
- In today’s reading, Practice of “First Fruits” as a discipline that cultivates Memory & Gratitude, Abundance & Generosity, Awe & Reverence, Community & Celebration

1st Lesson (Deuteronomy)

Recap/Summarize Deuteronomy 26:1-11

ENTER & SETTLE INTO PROMISED LAND: When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it,

GATHER “FIRST FRUITS” IN A BASKET, AND TAKE THEM TO THE PRIEST: You shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name.

You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us."

When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God:

REMEMBER & RECOUNT GOD’S FAITHFULNESS: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

RELEASE YOUR OFFERING:

“So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.”

You shall set it down before the Lord your God

BOW DOWN: *and bow down before the Lord your God.*

CELEBRATE: *Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.*

(4 movements)

Remember

Release

Bow

Celebrate

[start screenshare]

Traditional 3: Pray, Fast, Give: How might these traditional Lenten practices offer us an opportunity to enter more deeply into this holy, ancient, transformational rhythm of remembrance/gratitude, rhythm of release/generosity; rhythm of reverence; rhythm of joy & celebration?

Remember

Release

Bow

Celebrate

(4 movements)

“Cosmic Generosity” Stewardship @ St. Mark’s: How might our various stewardship practices offer us an opportunity to enter more deeply into this holy, ancient, transformational rhythm of remembrance/gratitude, rhythm of release/generosity; rhythm of reverence; rhythm of joy & celebration?

Remember

Release

Bow

Celebrate

(4 movements)

Money & Financial Resources

Relationships (Connections, Family, Friends)

Body, Physical Health & Resources

Mind, Mental Health & Resources

Spirit, Spiritual Health & Resources

Time

Energy (the earth’s and our own)

Earth, Land, Water, Natural Resources, Food

Privilege & Power

Knowledge, Education, Skills, Gifts, Passions

Remember
Release
Bow
Celebrate
(4 movements)

[stop screenshare]

What practices are you being called to embrace this Lent? What “first fruits” are you being called to gather up and offer at the altar of the Lord? How might this practice become an opportunity enter more deeply into

Into Remembrance

Into Release

Into A Posture of Deeper Reverence before the Divine

Into Deeper Joy & Celebration in Community?

Remember
Release
Bow
Celebrate
(4 movements)

Let us pray: *“God of grace and abundance, we remember your faithfulness to our ancestors in every generation, and your great goodness to us, that have brought us to **this** time and place.*

So now we bring the first of the fruits of our lives that you, O Lord, have given us. We release them, and we lay them down before you.

And we bow down before you, O Lord our God.

And we, together with the priests and the strangers among us, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to us and to our house. Amen.