

Lenten Devotional March 23, 2021

Scripture

Romans 10:1-13

1 Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. 2 I can testify that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to God's righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. 5 Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." 6 But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. 11 The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13 For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Devotional

The Rev. Elizabeth Wallace '07

"The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (v. 8). In the movie *You've Got Mail* there's a line in which the main character, the owner of a bookshop, says, "When you read a book as a child, it becomes a part of your identity in a way that no other reading in your whole life does."

As a child, in the evenings I would watch my parents and sister read and become entranced by the words on the page. Ever since I myself learned to read, I've been transfixed by the power of words. I remember going into my older sister's room (when she was away at a friend's house) to read not her diary, but her Bible. I knew there was something special about those words in particular, and I couldn't get enough of them.

In Jeremiah 31:33, God talks about the new covenant that will be written on the hearts of God's people. This new covenant won't be engraved on tablets of stone, but engraved on our hearts. When Scripture becomes part of our daily life, it shows up at unexpected times. We might find ourselves reciting a familiar psalm as we wait for results at the doctor's office. We might hear the words of 1 Corinthians 13 when we are feeling impatient and unkind. And these words from Romans 10 remind us that God is close at hand—and the word of God can be in our hearts and on our lips at all times.

Prayer

Gracious God, we give you thanks for your word in Scripture. May it guide and direct us during these 40 days of Lent. Help us to keep your word in our hearts and on our lips. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.