

Lent Devotional April 7, 2023 – Good Friday

Scripture

John 13:36-38

36 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward." 37 Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." 38 Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times."

Devotional

Rebecca Konegen '22

It's an exchange full of intention, as well as present and future time shifts: "I am", "you will", "what about now?" and then "I will", "will you?", and "you won't." Now, then later in the future, back to now, and then in the near future. What will happen versus what won't? There's a lot of skipping around, time-wise. And then there's identity: who Jesus is, which defines what he will do and is capable of doing, and who Peter is, which defines in turn what he is capable of doing and therefore will (or won't) do. Not to mention all of those pronouns.

We're kept so busy keeping track of the conversation that we can miss an essential point: Jesus says that Peter will follow after him *before* he tells Peter that Peter is about to deny him. Peter hasn't even yet faced the temptation to deny his association with Jesus.

Jesus offers assurance of salvation—the confidence of having been saved—even before the next sin occurs. The confidence is there *before* the cross—it's already a sure thing. Peter will go to that place Jesus is preparing.

The God whom we serve—whom we, like Peter, aspire to serve—offers love and grace, even knowing that we will stumble, badly. Our God sees our sins coming—not just the ones in our past, over which we no longer have control—and still acts to save. Still loves, still promises, still assures.

Prayer

God who sees, God who suffers at our own hands, you know us thoroughly. Our aspirations and our blunders, the moments when we live into your gifts and your promises, and the moments when we fail you utterly. And still, you act on our behalf. We are, as Peter is, humbled. Let us always know your grace. Amen.