

## Lenten Devotional March 13, 2024

### Scripture

#### Mark 8:11-26

*11 The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, asking him for a sign from heaven, to test him. 12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation." 13 And he left them, and getting into the boat again, he went across to the other side.*

*14 Now the disciples had forgotten to bring any bread; and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. 15 And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out - beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod." 16 They said to one another, "It is because we have no bread." 17 And becoming aware of it, Jesus said to them, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? 18 Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" They said to him, "Twelve." 20 "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" And they said to him, "Seven." 21 Then he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"*

*22 They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. 23 He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Can you see anything?" 24 And the man looked up and said, "I can see people, but they look like trees, walking." 25 Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. 26 Then he sent him away to his home, saying, "Do not even go into the village."*

### Devotion

#### The Rev. Audra Krise '10

"God, give me a sign . . ." How many of us have uttered those words with the hope that God would deliver a clear-cut sign, so we knew exactly what to do next in our life?

The truth is God is always speaking to us through our loved ones, the little voice in the back of our mind, and through Scripture. And no matter what path we choose, the promise remains the same: God is with us. Through good and bad, through poor decisions and the best ones, God remains at our side bringing us comfort, support, and love.

Our walk this Lent is about recognizing where Jesus is in our life and the best way is through an avid prayer life and reading the Bible. We don't need to test Jesus and ask him to give us a sign; Jesus already gave us all we need in this life by giving us eternal salvation. I know you want clear answers to the problems in your life, but that isn't faith. That is not God's purpose.

God gave us Jesus to cleanse us from our sins, from our temptations like asking for signs. Jesus sighed, deep in his soul because he knew the Pharisees had a sign standing before them and they didn't SEE. And as long as we keep trying to test God and asking him to make the decisions for us, we won't see either.

The point of our existence is choice. God gave humanity free will. Choose whichever option speaks to your heart and God will keep you going even if it's a bumpy walk. We're not always going to get it right,

but that's why Jesus's life, death, and resurrection is so important to our faith. Jesus makes the pathways straight and our destination is heaven.

Let go of asking God for the clear cut answers and instead embrace the unknown and enjoy the journey.

**Prayer**

Beautiful Savior, in our quest for certainty we forget only one thing is certain and that is our salvation through your sacrifice. Cleanse us of our need for answers and may we find you in the unexpected simplicity of realizing you never leave us nor forsake us. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.