

## **Lent Devotional March 18, 2026**

### **Scripture**

#### **Genesis 50:15-26**

*15 Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" 16 So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 17 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." 19 But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? 20 Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. 21 So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.*

*22 So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's household, and Joseph lived one hundred ten years. 23 Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; the children of Machir son of Manasseh were also born on Joseph's knees.*

*24 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely come to you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 So Joseph made the Israelites swear, saying, "When God comes to you, you shall carry up my bones from here." 26 And Joseph died, being one hundred ten years old; he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.*

### **Devotion**

#### **The Rev. Michael Wallace '14**

The Joseph story is one of the richest, and one of my favorites, in the whole Hebrew Bible. As we travel the wilderness road of Lent—a season marked by reflection, repentance, and self-examination—the journey of Joseph offers profound guidance. From a coveted coat revealing Joseph as his father's favorite to his siblings' plot to make Joseph disappear, then from the advances of Potiphar's wife to dream interpretation as a get-out-of-jail-free card, this story has all the drama worthy of a soap opera.

In the final chapters of Genesis, the tension increases as Joseph's brothers come to Egypt begging for help during a famine. They didn't recognize that their own brother was the official in charge. As readers, we know where events are headed. There will eventually be a big reveal, but will Joseph seek retribution and punish his siblings, or will he be moved with compassion and have mercy on them? Thankfully, Joseph doesn't hold a grudge and even seems to be thankful for the challenges of his life that have led him to this moment. He says to his brothers, "Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good."

In all the twists and turns of our lives, it can sometimes be difficult to see God's hand in it all. Yet the powerful testimony of Joseph reminds us that with holy hindsight we can more clearly bear witness to how God has led us through the most difficult days and seasons. When bad days come—and they most definitely will—let us pray for grace and a spirit of wonder as we seek to discern God's intentions in our lives.

### **Prayer**

O God of our days and especially of our nights, we pray for your accompanying presence to be with us through the twists and turns of our lives. In the pit of despair, help us to look up to you. Help us hold

onto hope that you are making all things new and that you intend even the worst moments for good and for your ultimate glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.