

## **Lent Devotional February 20, 2026**

### **Scripture**

#### **John 17:9-19**

*9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.*

### **Devotion**

#### **Dr. Elayne Arrington '21**

When I think of the 17th chapter of John, I am reminded of the fall of 1957, when I was 17 years old and a new student at the University of Pittsburgh. I was stricken during the Asian flu pandemic, and I collapsed on the floor of the ladies' room at Clapp Hall. I don't remember how I got home, but I remember that I had a raging fever and that a doctor came to the house. Some time later, I woke up, and I went to my mother's bedroom to tell her that I was feeling better. The door was almost, but not quite, closed. I saw my mother on her knees. I heard my mother praying. I heard my mother offering to give her life for mine if I could just recover. I left quietly, but the scene that I saw and the words that I heard were never erased from my mind. I recall them vividly more than sixty years later.

Similarly, the things that he saw and heard on Jesus' last earthly night were never erased from the mind of the beloved disciple, John. After more than sixty years, he vividly recalled that on Jesus' last night with "those whom God had given him"—after he had preached his last sermon to them, after he had presided over his last supper with them, after he had given them his last bequest—he looked up to heaven and said "Father," offering this last prayer for them. His prayer contains the imperative: "protect them ... so that they may be one, as we are one." So, Jesus' last prayer was that there would be harmonious unity of his disciples that resembled the unity of the Godhead. That unity is what I remember most about this prayer. It reminds me of the hymn, "Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above."

### **Prayer**

Father, it is my prayer that we will all be one: that as your disciples, we will experience a unity of spirit and purpose that celebrates our individual differences and our variety of gifts, and that you will sanctify us so that we may be set apart for divine use.