

Lent Devotional March 28, 2026

Scripture

2 Corinthians 4:13-18

13 But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and therefore we also speak, 14 because we know that the one who raised Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and will present us with you in his presence. 15 Indeed, everything is for your sake, so that grace, when it has extended to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

16 So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. 17 For our slight, momentary affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, 18 because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen, for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

Devotion

The Rev. Dr. Kurt J. Helmcke '10

Quilts have a powerful capacity for transmitting comfort. That's exactly what the Holy Spirit has been doing through our congregation's quilting group, who recently shared with me the names of several people to whom they have given handsewn quilts. I praised God as I pictured each of these recipients being comforted in their afflictions by the Holy Spirit, along with a quilt delivered by these agents of care.

In 2 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul honestly shares his struggles in a way that invites us to consider our own. Some struggles present themselves as minor inconveniences; others threaten to unravel the very fabric of our lives. Those of us called by God to ministries of care get a front-row seat to observe the suffering of others. As our Lenten journey draws closer to Holy Week, we ready ourselves to witness the suffering of Jesus for our sake.

We are well-acquainted with the aspects of life and loss that drain us of our hope and give rise to feelings of discouragement. Paul's bold claim that "we do not lose heart" (v. 16) seems remarkable. What gives Paul such hopeful confidence in the face of what he knows is "wasting away"? He describes a renewal of our inner nature that is happening day by day, springing from an eternal source, a "weight of glory" that when compared to our afflictions make them seem light. It's a confidence we have because "the one who raised Jesus will also raise us with Jesus" (v. 14).

This eternal weight of glory that we have in Christ is like the comfort of quilts, the old-school version of today's weighted blankets, prescribed for those who suffer from stress and anxiety. The weight of the blanket provides something like a human hug, deep pressure stimulation that settles us into calmness. This describes well what happens when we consider ourselves blanketed in the comforting weight of God's eternal promises.

Prayer

God of all comfort, thank you for those who receive your comfort and pass it along to others, sometimes with a quilt that wraps us in warmth. Remind us of the eternal weight of glory we have in Jesus that wraps us in comfort amid our afflictions, renewing our hope. Amen.