



# LENT

## A SEASON OF RETURNING

REFLECTIONS FOR WALKING THROUGH  
THE LENTEN SEASON TOGETHER

RUTH HALEY BARTON



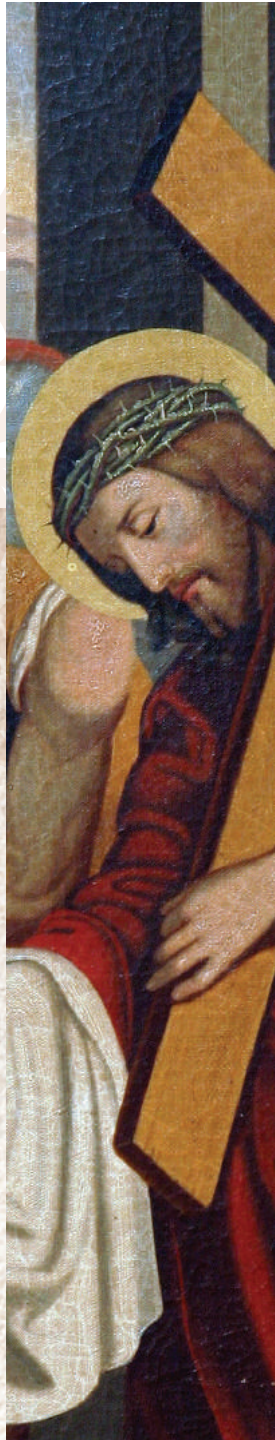
#### **A word about the practice of following the lectionary**

The practice of following a common lectionary—a three-year reading schedule that follows the Christian calendar—is an age-old practice that allows the Word of God to guide and shape us throughout the seasons of the church year in the context of the larger community of faith.

Through the discipline of using a shared schedule of Scripture readings, we engage the full range of Scripture and touch all the major themes and passages at least once every three years. The lectionary readings for each week include an Old Testament reading, a Psalm, an Epistle, and a Gospel that share a common theme. Following the lectionary helps us pray and engage Scripture together with particular reverence for the Gospel readings which keep us connected with the life of Christ.

We suggest “reading into” the upcoming Sunday so that those who attend churches that follow the lectionary will then hear the Scriptures they have already been reflecting on throughout the week. Then on Monday, start reading the lectionary selections for the upcoming Sunday. Read not only for information but also for transformation, allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart about God’s invitations to you this season.

Following the lectionary helps us practice surrender—giving ourselves over to Scriptures that have been chosen for us rather than choosing Scripture according to what we think we need or with some other agenda in mind. We surrender to God’s control, allowing Him to bring Scripture to bear on our lives in unexpected ways as He knows we need them. Since the lectionary readings follow the rhythms of the Christian year, we are also surrendering to and being shaped by the life-transforming lessons contained in each season—Advent, the Christmas season, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Eastertide, Ordinary Time—and many other important days in the life of the Church.





*“And yet even now,’ says the Lord,  
‘return to me with all your heart...’”  
Joel 2:12*

# LENT

## A SEASON OF RETURNING

### INTRODUCTION

The seasons of the church year are meant to teach us something about the spiritual life we need to learn. This book of reflections on the Lenten season is designed to provide guidance for individuals and groups in the spiritual practices associated with Lent.

The first reflection will help you experience Ash Wednesday as an invitation to the season of Lent. The following six reflections correspond to the six weeks of Lent and are based on the lectionary readings for each week. Even though the lectionary is a three-year reading schedule with three cycles (A, B, and C), each reflection is designed to correspond to the common themes found in all the cycles so that the booklet can be used year after year.

To receive maximum benefit from this resource, begin each week by reading the Scriptures for that week from whatever cycle we are in. You may want to start a Lenten journal in which you reflect on what God is saying to you through the Scripture selections and the accompanying meditation; or use the space provided to record your response to the reflection question(s) which might, at times, come in the form of a prayer. If you are able to take the Lenten journey as a family, with your small group, or with a spiritual friend, use your journal entries as a basis for sharing how God is leading you to experience Lent as a season of transformation.

ASH WEDNESDAY

# CROSSING THE THRESHOLD INTO LENT



*“And yet even now,’ says the  
Lord, ‘return to me with all your  
heart . . .’”  
Joel 2:12*

## **Lectionary readings for Ash Wednesday:**

YEAR C

*Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or*

*Isaiah 58:1-12*

*Psalms 51:1-17*

*2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10*

*Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Church’s observance of the Lenten season—six weeks that are set apart for the purpose of drawing closer to God and seeking him with greater intensity. Unfortunately, the Lenten season often gets reduced to the question, “What are you giving up for Lent?” This is a fine question, but it can only take us so far. The real question of the Lenten season is, “How will I repent and return to God with all my heart?”

This begs an even deeper question: “Where in my life have I gotten away from God, and what are the disciplines that will enable me to find my way back?”

### **Honest to God**

Ash Wednesday initiates this season in which we are called to be as honest as we are able about the ways we have “left” God and slipped into spiritual mediocrity. “*You desire truth in the inward being*,” Psalm 51 points out, “*Therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.*”

As God gives us wisdom and insight about our true condition, we can choose spiritual practices that are uniquely suited to help us return to God in the places where we have strayed or to renew our passion where our hearts have grown cold. The Scripture readings

for Ash Wednesday (which are the same for Cycles A, B, and C) provide a good introduction to some of the concrete disciplines that have the potential to loosen the grip of sin and distraction in our lives—prayer and fasting, hiddenness, self-examination and repentance, forgiving others as we have been forgiven, and storing up treasure in heaven by giving generously to others.

### **Search Me, O God**

Left to ourselves, we probably would not choose to devote a whole season to such rigorous and demanding disciplines, but God knows we need it. As we receive the symbolic gesture of the imposition of ashes on our foreheads, we acknowledge our human finiteness and mortality. No matter who we think we are, receiving the ashes reminds us that, “You are dust and to dust you will return” (Genesis 3:19). This is not meant to be morbid; it is just meant to limit our grandiosity and help us to stay in touch with the real human condition we all share.

The ashes marking our foreheads carry the same meaning contained in the Old Testament practice of covering oneself with ashes. They are a graphic reminder of our sinfulness, an outward sign of inward repentance and mourning as we become aware of our sin. This, too, is good

*Oh God, let something essential happen to me, something awesome, something real. Speak to my condition, Lord, and change me somewhere inside where it matters.*

Ted Loder, *Guerrillas of Grace*

## Longing for God

## God's Steadfast Love

**FOR REFLECTION:** Where are the places in your own life where you feel distant from God? What has distracted you from cultivating your relationship with God more intentionally? Begin your Lenten journey by saying something honest to God and reflecting on what you might “give up” or rearrange in order to create more space and passion for this most important relationship.

# SOLITUDE:

## FASHIONING OUR OWN WILDERNESS



*“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit,  
returned from the Jordan and  
was led by the Spirit in the  
wilderness where for forty days  
he was tempted by the devil.”  
Luke 4:1, 2*

### Lectionary readings for the first Sunday in Lent:

YEAR C  
Deuteronomy 26:1-11  
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16  
Romans 10:8b-13  
Luke 4:1-13

The season of Lent derives its structure and its themes from Christ’s forty days in the wilderness, where he fasted and prayed and faced Satan’s temptations. This was not punishment; in fact, he had just experienced God’s public affirmation of his true identity: “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” Indeed, he was driven into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit as part of his preparation for the ministry that was ahead of him. There he faced the deepest temptations of the human experience—the temptation to trust in that which is not God for our security and survival, affirmation and approval, power and control.

Richard Rohr observes, “These three temptations are the primal and universal temptations that all humans must face before they dare to take on any kind of power—as Jesus was about to do. They are all temptations to the misuse of power for purposes that are less than God’s purpose. Jesus passes all three tests, and thus ‘the devil left him’ because he could not be used for lesser purposes. If you face such demons in yourself, God can use you mightily. Otherwise, you will, for sure be used.”<sup>1</sup>

During Lent we experience the evil one’s proficiency at crafting very subtle and dangerous appeals to

our instinctual patterns to save ourselves through our own human strategies rather than trusting God for what we need. A true Lenten journey demands that we take a clear-eyed look at our lives and wonder, “Where am I tempted to ‘turn these stones into bread’—using whatever gifts and powers God has given me to secure my own survival? Where am I putting God to the test—disregarding human limitations in order to prove something to others—and expecting him to come to my rescue time and time again? When, where and how am I tempted to worship the outward trappings of success rather than seeking the inner authority that comes from worshipping God and serving Him only?”

Oftentimes we think of the wilderness as a harsh and punishing place; however, it can also be a place where we find clarity, discover inner strength, and experience the salvation that comes from God alone. It can be a place where we experience God’s steadfast love. As Henri Nouwen says, “We have to fashion our own desert where we can withdraw every day, shake off our compulsions and dwell in the gentle healing presence of the Lord. Without such a desert we will lose our own soul while preaching the gospel to others.”<sup>2</sup>

Ruth Burgess, *Bread of Tomorrow*

**FOR REFLECTION:** In what ways am I trusting something or someone other than God for security and survival, affirmation and approval, power and control? During this Lenten season, how will I fashion my own desert—create more space for solitude and stillness—for the purpose of waiting on God and experiencing his steadfast love as my true salvation?

# SELF-DENIAL: SETTING OUR MINDS ON THINGS ABOVE



*"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me."  
Mark 8:34*

## **Lectionary readings for the second Sunday in Lent:**

YEAR C

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalms 27

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 13:31-35 or Luke 9:28-36,  
(37-43a)

Most years I don't feel quite ready for Lent with all its demands and disciplines—especially the call to self-denial and fasting. I don't want to just "give up chocolate for Lent" because God is the curmudgeon in the sky who wants to keep it from me. And I don't want anyone (including myself) to see the spiritual life as a joyless existence that eschews God's good gifts.

And yet, I also don't want to miss anything either! I don't want to miss the possibility of having my life stripped down to its barest essence through fasting from those things that keep me out of touch with my longing and need for God. I don't want to sidestep this "spring cleaning of the soul" intended to clear out the junk and garbage in my life so there is more space for God. I don't want to miss the chance to abstain from soul-numbing distractions so I can be more attuned to God's voice ringing as clear as a bell in the depths of my uncluttered soul.


As we get in touch with our deeper spiritual desires for this season, sometimes we know immediately what our disciplines of abstinence should be. We are struck with some sense of what we need to give up in order to more fully receive the gifts of God's kingdom. If we are struggling with issues of pride and ego-drivenness, we can abstain from activities that feed the ego. We can practice hiddenness—praying, giving and serving without drawing attention to ourselves. If we struggle with sins of speech, carelessness with

our words, or a tendency toward constant chatter, we might consider additional time in daily silence, a longer silent retreat, or just choosing to talk less during this season. If we are aware of exhaustion due to being overextended, we could pare down our activities during this time in order to be more rested and alert in God's presence.

If we find ourselves relying too much on caffeine or other stimulants, why not give up caffeine and ask God to reveal the real sources of our tiredness so we can deal with our exhaustion at the source? If we tend toward the sin of gluttony and our eating patterns are out of control, we might consider some rhythms of fasting from food.

If we are addicted to our work and always relying on our own human effort, we could engage in rhythms of fixed hour prayer that interrupt us and help us turn to God in the midst of our work. If we are addicted to technology, we might consider disconnecting from cell phones, computers and tablets for certain portions of the day or week.

Whatever we choose, disciplines of fasting and other kinds of abstinence clear the decks for spiritual action. As we clear out the clutter of compulsive behaviors and emerge from the fog of inner distractions, we become more finely attuned to the presence of God and all the ways in which that Presence satisfies us utterly.



**FOR REFLECTION:** What activities, behaviors, and relationships are most distracting to my spiritual life these days? Which ones keep me from seeking God with all my heart? During this Lenten season, what do I need to fast from in order to focus more fully on heavenly things?

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*O God, I admit it ...I know nothing about self-denial. I don't know what to give up or how or why.*

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*My whole life is about consuming and being consumed...and I am deeply cynical about anything that diminishes your desire for us to CHOOSE LIFE.*

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*And yet...I know that simplifying actually clarifies, spring cleaning sweeps away the junk and garbage that weighs me down, eliminating distraction puts me in touch with what I most deeply want— which is you and your life-changing Wind blowing unencumbered through my life.*

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*O God, lead me in the letting go of anything that distracts, numbs, keeps me jumbled on the inside.*

*Guide me into uncluttered rooms and wide-open spaces where I can meet you.  
Amen.*

Ruth Haley Barton

# REPENTANCE: CLEANING OUR MESSY HOUSE



*“Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and do not forget all his  
benefits—who forgives all  
your iniquity, who heals all  
your diseases, who redeems  
your life from the Pit, who  
crowns you with steadfast love  
and mercy...” Psalm 103:2-4*

## Lectionary readings for the third Sunday in Lent:

YEAR C

Isaiah 55:1-9

Psalm 63:1-8

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Luke 13:1-9

In her book *Amazing Grace*, Kathleen Norris tells the story of working as an artist-in-residence at a parochial school, teaching children how to write poetry using the Psalms as a model. One little boy wrote a poem entitled, “The Monster Who Was Sorry.” He began by admitting that he hates it when his father yells at him: his response (in the poem) is to throw his sister down the stairs, and then to wreck his room, and finally to wreck the whole town. The poem concludes, “Then I sit in my messy house and say to myself, ‘I shouldn’t have done all that.’”

“My messy house” says it all, Norris observes, “With more honesty than most adults could have mustered, the boy made a metaphor for himself that admitted the depth of his rage and gave him a way out... he was well on his way toward repentance, not a monster after all, but only human. If the house is messy, why not clean it up? Why not make it into a place where God might wish to dwell?”<sup>3</sup>

During Lent we are called to enter more intentionally into prayer, self-examination and repentance for the purpose of restoration and renewal. We are willing to sit in our messy house and get a little more honest about the fact that we are in disarray. To the best of our ability we acknowledge what got us into the mess we are in, we feel our remorse, and we say, “I wish I hadn’t done that.” This is truth in the inward being.

Many of us have a hard time admitting that our house is messy. Like the money changers Jesus confronted in the temple in John 2, we have a lot riding on the way in which we’ve got things set up in our inner world. On some level, the sins and negative patterns work for us, otherwise we wouldn’t be so attached to them. We need Jesus to come into the temple of our body and our life and say, “Take these things out of here; they do not belong in a house of prayer!”

The first step in the practice of repentance is self-examination—reviewing our lives in God’s presence, asking Him to bring to our awareness those places where we are not like Christ and where we are caught in the grip of sin and negative patterns. Perhaps there is a vague sense that something is not right (like a subtle resistance to doing something loving for another person); or, it could be something more clear-cut (such as an angry outburst). Whatever it is, we are willing to see without rationalizing and listen without defending. This is called awakening.

As painful as it is to be exposed at this level, awakening is evidence of God’s grace. God is at work leading us out of the bondage of sin into the freedom from sin that is ours in Christ. We can then invite Jesus to help us understand what’s going on inside us that caused the bad behavior so that he can root it out at the source. Once the temple is swept clean, it can become a place of prayer again.

*O God of such truth as sweeps away all lies,  
of such grace as shrivels all excuses,  
come now to find us  
for we have lost our selves  
in a shuffle of disguises  
and in the rattle of empty words.*

*We have been careless  
of our days,  
our loves,  
our gifts,  
chances...*

*Our prayer is to change , O God,  
not out of despair of self  
but for love of you,  
and for the selves we long to become  
before we simply waste away.*

*Let your mercy move in and through us now...  
Amen.*

Ted Loder, *My Heart in My Mouth*

**FOR REFLECTION:** Set aside some time this week to review all the major components of your life in God's presence—family, work, church, friendships, and your personal relationship with him. Ask God to show you places where you fall short of Christlikeness and need his help for further transformation. As He does, be as honest as you can about the fact that this is a room in your house that needs to be cleaned up.

# CONFESSION: COMING HOME TO GOD

*"Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and you forgave the guilt of my sin." Psalm 32:5*



## Lectionary readings for the fourth Sunday in Lent:

YEAR C  
Joshua 5:9-12  
Psalm 32  
2 Corinthians 5:16-21  
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Confession is good for the soul—and everyone around us. Like the prodigal son who finally came to his senses and confessed to his father, "I have sinned," and discovered that his father was waiting for him with love in his heart and forgiveness on his lips, Lent is a season when we, too, have the opportunity to confess our sin and experience God's steadfast love and forgiveness. *"But while he was far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him."*

Confession is the outward discipline associated with the inner act of repentance; it gives us something concrete to *do* with the sins and negative patterns we are naming in God's presence. The trouble is, we live in a culture that promotes a profound sense of denial about the presence of sin in our lives. Even when something *is* our fault, we are encouraged not to admit it unless we can derive some benefit from it (like a reduced penalty, repairing our public image, etc.). We are encouraged to hide the truth until we can no longer get away with it. And, even then, we may still try to twist facts or misuse language to keep from having to acknowledge personal responsibility for our actions. We use all sorts of means, ranging from flat-out denial to subtle misuse of language, to avoid having to admit we are wrong.

True confession requires us to name our sin out loud to ourselves, to God, and to the person(s) we have injured or offended, taking steps to renounce it for Christ's sake. True confession will involve the willingness to make restitution if that is needed.

Wouldn't it be something if, during this Lenten season, we asked God to help us "make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves"<sup>47</sup>? What if we actually confessed *as sin* our bad behaviors toward others—both in our current situations and also in the history of our past relationships? What if during this season we wrote notes, made phone calls, and had face-to-face meetings in which we confessed our sins to one another and asked forgiveness for sins past and present?

I cannot imagine a more powerful force for good in this world than for us as Christians to confess our sins to God and to one another so that grace can flow more freely among us. I cannot imagine the homecomings there might be in our relationships with God and with each other as we acknowledge the ways we have each wounded our own life, the lives of others, and the life of the world. Let us not miss the opportunity to confess our sins to God and to one another so that we can be healed.

For more on the discipline of self examination, repentance, and confession see *Sacred Rhythms* (InterVarsity Press, 2006) Chapter 6.

God, help us find our confession;  
The truth within us which is hidden  
from our mind;  
The beauty or the ugliness  
we see elsewhere  
But never see in ourselves;  
The stowaway which has been smuggled  
Into the dark side of the heart...  
Lead us into the darkness  
that we may find  
what lies concealed;  
That we may confess it towards the light;  
That we may carry our truth  
in the centre  
of our heart;  
That we may carry our cross wisely  
And bring harmony into our life and  
into our world.

*Amen.*

Michael Leunig, *The Prayer Tree*

11

# SUFFERING: DYING THAT WE MIGHT LIVE

*“Unless a grain of wheat falls  
into the earth and dies, it  
remains just a single grain; but  
if it dies, it bears much fruit.”  
John 12:24*

## Lectionary readings for the fifth Sunday in Lent:

YEAR C

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalms 126

Philippians 3:4b-14

John 12:1-8

I'll never forget walking to lunch with several young leaders after a teaching I had done on the season of the spiritual life in which God is dismantling the false self in order for the true self to emerge more fully. We had talked about the fact that this season feels like death, and in fact it is—the death of that which is false in order for something truer to come to life.

Clearly the teaching had unnerved them, for as we walked together one of them asked, “Does everyone have to go through this painful place in the spiritual life?” I stopped and thought for a moment and finally said the only thing I could think to say: “Well, even Jesus had to die in order for the will of God to come forth in his life.”

This week's lesson brings us face to face with one of the great paradoxes of our faith—that in order to really live, we must die. That before we can reign with Christ we must first share in his sufferings. That when God begins to do a new thing, old things must pass away. That in order to experience resurrection we, too, must die.


That's the bad news. The good news is that the only thing we stand to lose is the false self, which is not real anyway. The only thing passing away is that crusty old thing that is no longer useful.

Fr. Thomas Keating writes, “The spiritual journey is not a career or a success story. It is a series of small humiliations of the false self that become more and more profound. These make room inside us for the Holy Spirit to come and heal. What prevents us from being available to God is gradually evacuated as we keep getting closer and closer to our Center”<sup>5</sup>—the place where God dwells within us as redeemed people. Oftentimes it is suffering that initiates these necessary “evacuations”; even Jesus learned obedience through the things he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8)

Lent, then, is a time to practice dying in small ways so that when the bigger deaths come, we will know how to let go of that which is no longer needed. It is time to learn obedience in and through the things we suffer, just like Jesus did. It is a time for experiencing what it is like to have our outer nature wasting away while our inner nature is being renewed day by day.

For more on the true self/false self see *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (InterVarsity Press, 2008) Chapters 2 and 3.

For more on the Paschal rhythm of death, burial, and resurrection see *Life Together in Christ* (InterVarsity Press, 2014) Chapter 6.



**FOR REFLECTION:** What needs to die in me in order for the will of God to come forth in my life? What new thing is God doing in my life that requires some old things to pass away? Where do I sense God wanting to teach me obedience through the things I am suffering?

*Yes, Lord, I have to die—with you, through you, and in you—and thus become ready to recognize you when you appear to me in your resurrection. There is so much in me that needs to die: false attachments, greed and anger, impatience and stinginess. O Lord, I am self-centered, concerned about myself, my career, my future, my name and fame. Often I even feel that I use you to my own advantage.*

*Yes, Lord, I know it is true. I know that often I have spoken about you, written about you, and acted in your name for my own glory and success. Your name has not led me to persecution, oppression, or rejection. Your name has brought me rewards! I see clearly how little I have died with you, really gone your way and been faithful to it. O Lord, make this Lenten season different from the other ones. Let me find you again.  
Amen.*

Henri Nouwen, “Spirituality of Waiting”

WEEK SIX

# HOLY WEEK: AN INVITATION TO WALK WITH CHRIST

*"Could you not stay awake  
with me one hour?"*  
*Matthew 26:40*

## **Lectionary readings for the sixth Sunday in Lent:**

YEAR C

Liturgy of the Palms:  
*Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29*  
*Luke 19:28-40*

Liturgy of the Passion:  
*Isaiah 50:4-9a*  
*Psalm 31:9-16*  
*Philippians 2:5-11*  
*Luke 22:14-23:56 or Luke*  
*23:1-49*

**H**oly Week is a bizarre juxtaposition of two kinds of passion. In the early part of the week we witness the passion of a hyped-up crowd screaming their affirmation that Jesus is king as he rides humbly into Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey. Later in the week we witness Jesus' own passion (suffering) as he walks resolutely into the final stages of God's plan for our redemption.

Many churches that worship liturgically and follow the lectionary live both passions on the sixth Sunday of Lent—they stage a processional with palm branches early in the service (Liturgy of the Palms) and then read the Liturgy of the Passion in its entirety later on in the service.

In the church where I worship, the whole congregation participates in the Liturgy of the Passion by reading the parts spoken by the fickle crowd. It is very sobering to move from crying out in loud voices, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" to shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" It is a true beginning to the intense and conflicting emotions of this week in which we seek ways to walk with Christ and participate in his passion.

Holy Week is the week in which we as Christians give ourselves most fully and completely to worship. Every year at this time we have the opportunity to choose as best as we can to deepen our friendship with Christ by staying with him and

learning from him as we journey from the triumph of Palm Sunday through the darkness and death of the crucifixion to the victory of the Resurrection. As we seek ways to share the events of this week with Jesus, we respond to his deep and consistent desire to be with those he loves, those whom he has chosen.

Make no mistake—the invitation to walk with Christ through the events of Holy Week is a challenging one. It is an invitation to learn how to be like Christ—not just during the triumphs of Palm Sunday when everything is as we hoped it would be— but also how to be like Christ in the midst of betrayal, violence, pain, struggle, and death. If we're honest, we might admit that we would prefer to skip right to the Resurrection! As Barbara Brown Taylor once commented, "I want to stop about a day short of following Jesus all the way."

As challenging as it is, walking with Christ during Holy Week is part of our discipleship. It is an act of love and friendship with Christ, a gift of staying present with him during the hardest and most unnerving part of his journey. We do this because he has asked us to remain near him, awake and alert. It is the gift of ourselves, which is the truest gift we have to give.

So let us pray together as we enter this Holy Week . . .

*Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

*Book of Common Prayer*

**For Reflection:** What plans will I make to walk with Christ during this Holy Week? How will I share in his suffering so that I can also experience his Resurrection power?



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1. Richard Rohr, *Wondrous Encounters: Scripture for Lent* (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2011), pp. 23, 24.
2. Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart: Desert Spirituality and Contemporary Ministry* (New York: Harper San Francisco, 1981), p. 30.
3. As quoted in *Bread and Wine: Readings for Lent and Easter* (Mary Knoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), pp. 4, 5.
4. The fourth step of A.A.'s Twelve-step program.
5. Fr. Thomas Keating, *The Human Condition* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), p. 38.

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LENT19



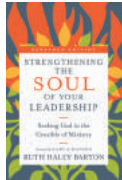
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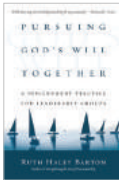
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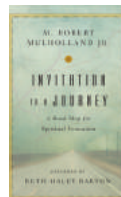
#### PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION



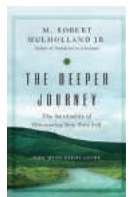
*Invitation to Retreat*



*Invitation to Solitude and Silence*



*Invitation to a Journey*



*The Deeper Journey*

### DVD/Music



*Spiritual Transformation for the Sake of Others (DVD)*



*Transforming Worship: The Lord is in Our Midst (CD)*

### Seasons of Transformation: Resources for the Church Year

#### FOR THE SEASONS OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE



*Advent: Music in Solitude (CD)*

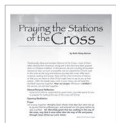


*Christmastide: Music in Solitude (CD)*



*Advent: Reflections for Walking Through Advent Together*

#### FOR THE SEASON OF LENT:



*Stations of the Cross Worship Service (Printable PDF)*



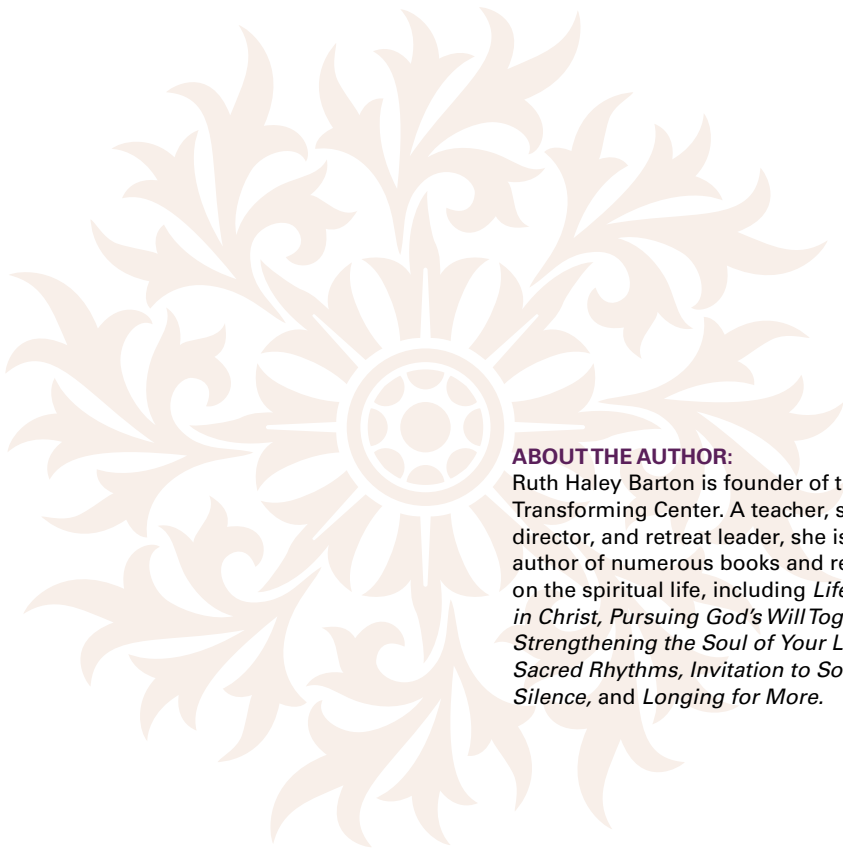
*Lent Reflections: A Season of Returning*



*Lent: Music in Solitude (CD)*



*Stations of the Cross Prayer Guide*



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Ruth Haley Barton is founder of the Transforming Center. A teacher, spiritual director, and retreat leader, she is the author of numerous books and resources on the spiritual life, including *Life Together in Christ*, *Pursuing God's Will Together*, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, *Sacred Rhythms*, *Invitation to Solitude and Silence*, and *Longing for More*.



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