

DEVOTIONS FOR LENT
MARCH 30th, 2020

Running Again

Bible Reading

Jonah 1,2 But the Lord provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights ... But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Deliverance belongs to the LORD!" Then the LORD spoke to the fish, and it spewed Jonah out upon the dry land.

Context

Considering the acids in the belly of any creature, Jonah's countenance would frighten anyone who caught sight of him. Jonah is on a downward spiral down to Joppa, down to the belly of the ship, down to the belly of a fish and finally down to the bottom of the ocean. God once again grants Jonah "severe mercy" offering him another chance as he bottoms out.

Devotion

When I listened to fifth steps in the AA program from inmates, I was impressed by their honest confession and real work to admit their defeat (thus replying on a higher power as the twelve steps demands for success). My experience led me to volunteer on my next call to listen to fifth steps from judges who ordered the offenders to perform the requirement. What a difference. I might not have recognized the difference had I not heard the genuine inmates' confessions. These were half-hearted, clearly the individuals were going through the motions. Even though Jonah is thrown into the water, God is not done with him. As we will soon see, he is not quite willing to repent for the sake of Nineveh.

Reflection Questions

Do you believe that Jonah is ready to serve his Lord at this point?
We hear the common, yet appropriate "Let go and Let God." Reflect on a point in your life when you felt you truly "let go."

Prayer

Merciful Redeemer, continue to work with us in our frailties, our stubbornness, and faithlessness. In Jesus name. Amen.