

Lenten Reflection

Friday, First Week of Lent March 10, 2017



By Associate Laurie Mansell Reich

“Cast away from you all the crimes you have committed, says the Lord, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.” (Ezekiel 18:31)

Lent is a time of reflection, of drawing nearer to God. A time of cleaning out and renewal. But I have never given a thought to examining my “righteousness” in this context - until now.

The Scripture today tells us that we will not enter the Kingdom of heaven unless our righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees (and we all know how righteous they thought themselves!). How many of us understand righteousness let alone pay attention to measuring our own?

Part of the answer can be found in Ezekiel 18:31, which intimates that to be righteous we are to be rid of all the crimes we have committed and make for ourselves a new heart and a new spirit. So is that it? Is that enough? I don’t know about you, but I could spend an entire lifetime, not just a Lenten journey, making a new heart and spirit. And I may be able to rid myself of past crimes - but refraining from new sin? Is that even possible?

The dictionary defines righteousness as “acting in accord with divine or moral law.” Several synonyms include “honest, just, moral, virtuous, decent” and even “nice.” Are we all of these things in all circumstances? I don’t know about you, but this is going to require prayer and self-examination on my part.

During this time of Lent I am going to be conscious of righteousness in the many moments of my life. I also commit to a much longer journey so that, yes, I may enter the Kingdom of Heaven righteous before my Lord and God. Please, will you join me?

