

# Lenten Reflection

## Monday, March 14, 2016

*By Sister Anne Winschel, CDP*



It seems like only yesterday that we received ashes on our forehead as a reminder to join the community of believers in our Lenten Pilgrimage to resurrection. We were invited to turn back to the Lord with all our hearts, to be serious disciples, to take time to be still and know consciously that God walks with us in our everyday reality, whatever that might be. Where have we been these past five weeks of Lent? How have we encountered Jesus on our Lenten Journey? How have we allowed the cries of the poor or in our deprived brothers and sisters of today's reality challenge us to respond with openness, non-judgment, mercy, forgiveness and love?

Lent is indeed is a time for hope and healing. In our Liturgical year, the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent are referred to as the "Scrutinities" of the Elect for those who are preparing for Baptism. For each of us the Gospel stands as a call to live a more fully committed life with Jesus as disciples. It is truly a gift to reflect upon the journey of the elect as a source of renewal for us in our Lenten journey experiences.

Scrutiny, which is derived from the Latin 'scrutari' is a careful and detailed examination of something in order to get information about it (Cambridge Dictionary) We pause then on our journey to examine areas of our lives where we have been tempted to forget about our Ash Wednesday promises and desires to have Jesus be the center of all we are and do or have failed to do.

Daniel, our first reading for today, presents us with genuine calls for scrutiny. Where do we find our heart response to life issues in this scripture message? Do we identify with Susanna who was judged and falsely accused? Or might we find aspects of our behavioral patterns reflected in the hearts of the two elders who accused her, rather than look into the shadows of their own personal lives and their own sinfulness? Is our response when we find ourselves misjudged like Susanna, mean-spirited and despairing, or one that brings us to a new level of relationship with our God of Providence? Do we find ourselves praying like Susanna did in this terrible experience: "O eternal God, you know what is hidden and are aware of all things before they come to be"? (Dn .13)

In experiences of diminishment or difficulties, can we trust that God can still stir up the spirit of the Holy in one another and live into the true meaning of Lent with hope, healing and openness to resurrection?

The scrutiny for today gifts us to cry out: "We exalt your Providence O God and we commit ourselves to making your Providence more visible in our world today as we are graced and called this Lent! John reminds us in today's Gospel "I am the Light of the world. Whoever walks with me does not walk in darkness." Even though it's Lent we rejoice for Resurrection is our promise!