

Lenten Reflection

Ash Wednesday March 1, 2017



By Sister Betty Sundry, CDP

As a child the main thing I remember about Lent is “What was I going to give up? As an adult the three-pronged historical approach to this special season, namely, a concentration on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving is my mainstay. In this short reflection, I would like to comment on the first - that of prayer.

As a Sister of Divine Providence, I reflect often on the wonder of a Provident God that cares so much for all of us. In this way of approaching God, my faith is always strong, and of course even stronger in good times than in the not so good times. The challenge to faith for me, and all of us, may come when we hit a roadblock, such as, a serious illness - our own or a loved one, the death of a parent, sibling, friend, the loss of a job, etc. How do we approach our Provident God at that point? In Joan Chittister’s book, *The Breath of the Soul*, she remarks, “Prayer confronts us with ourselves and measures the distance between who and what we are and who and what Jesus is.” (Chittister 55). And also, “Being immersed in prayer, really immersed in prayer, sears* our souls. It forces us to see how far from our own ideals we stand. It challenges the images of goodness and piety we project. It confronts us with what it really means to live a good life. It requires courage of us rather than simply piety.” (Chittister 55).

When praying and I am faced with things not going the way I think they should go, I try to remember Joan Chittister’s words and thoughts on being “immersed in prayer.” Life for every human being has its good times along with its stumbling blocks. May we always find ways to deal with setbacks and remain faithful to our Provident God.

**emphasis mine*

Chittister, J. (2009). *The breath of the soul: Reflections on prayer*. New London, CT: Twenty-third Publications.

