

**Resurrection Steps of our Lenten Journey** – daily reflections on the Scripture readings for Lent

We begin our daily Lenten journey with Jesus. Along the way, we go to an “out of the way” place to encounter His presence in Readings, Reality, and Prayer.

**Ash Wednesday** and **Valentine’s Day**.

**Readings:** Joel 2.12-18 – God speaks to the heart; 2 Cor. 5.20-6.2 – We are hollow reeds; and Mt. 6.1-6, 16-18 – Enter God’s presence.

**Reality:** Prayer, Almsgiving, and Fasting – do not get carried away now because it is Lent. Why change your lifestyle for the next 40 days? “This is the greatest treason, to do the right thing during Lent for the wrong reason.” We are reminded to be models, mentors, and messengers for others in the name of Jesus without fanfare or recognition. Make each ordinary day extraordinary by filling it with good intentions that have positive consequences. This can be a recipe for the ethical life: good intentions, pursuing ideals, and having positive consequences.

Look at the Pharisees, they were parading around in their regal robes and insisting on titles, and places of honor. How is it that Bishops sit at the head table and a Pope on a throne? Is the Magisterium having flashbacks of Emperor Constantine with all the trappings of the Holy Roman Empire?

A story is told about a person notorious for his unethical ways. One day he announced to Mark Twain, “Before I die, I mean to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I will climb Mount Sinai, read the 10 commandments aloud at the top, and then I will visit all the other holy places in Jerusalem.” Twain quipped, “I have a better idea. You could stay home in Boston and keep them.”

**Prayer:** According to Rabbi Heschel – prayer will not save me but make me worth saving.