



Lenten Reflection for Wednesday, March 2nd

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You can listen to the reading and reflection by clicking [here](#).

Joel 2:12 - 18

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Then the Lord became jealous for his land, and had pity on his people.

I agreed to share a reflection not knowing that it would be "due" at the end of my daughters' winter break while we were away visiting my in-laws in Florida. At first, I felt annoyed (with myself!) that I agreed to share but as I read my assigned passage, I was immediately struck by the call to "return to me with all of your heart...". When is there a better time to reflect than when you are on vacation, I said to myself and why are you annoyed? I recalled a lovely conversation I had with the mothers' before the break and how Mother Kimberlee reshaped a perspective I let sneak in that church is one more ask on my time versus an opportunity to nourish myself.

So, I kept reading, and re-reading the passage and next I felt a longing to be "slow to anger" like God. Why am impatient and inflexible? How can I give all my heart, how can I make more space for God in my life, how can I be "slow to anger"? Be vulnerable, listen. What are the things that take me away from my family, my friends, and God? What are the things that take away from me nourishing myself? Why do I find myself quietly weeping after receiving communion at church?

There are some simple answers and some deeply personal. I can leave my phone in the drawer when I return home from work, I don't need to respond to every call, text, or email right away! I can leave the kitchen messy to start family game night sooner or better, I can accept the offers of help from my family

and accept that they are not going to clean it the same perfect way I do (lol!). I can skip those weekday cocktails and feel rested and patient the next day. I can replace that hour of bedtime TV with an hour of nourishing reading or sleep! I can visit with a friend instead of making dinner once in a more frequent while. I can allow the quiet weep to grow into an exploring bawl. I can pick just one of these, to make more space, and I will.



I'm from a small town in Western Massachusetts but for the past 13 years Brooklyn is my home. I live right around the corner from Holy Apostles, with my husband Robert, two daughters Olivia and Ellie, and the newest member of our family, Georgia, a dog we rescued from a pecan tree in Georgia!