



Lenten Reflection for Monday, March 7th

Jenna McAuley

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

Psalm 19:8 - 14

The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart
the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is clean, and endures for ever;*
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold*
sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.
By them also is your servant enlightened*
and in keeping them there is great reward.
Who can tell how often he offends?*
cleanse me from my secret faults.
Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins, let them not get dominion over me;*
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offence.
Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,*
O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.*

It was around this time last year on my Lenten Journey that I picked up a copy of No Other Gods by Ana Levy-Lyons for my book selection. I was going through a pretty hard time at that moment and wasn't really feeling my connection with God. I thought it might be time to bring my search for connection to where it all began and start there. Worst case, I thought, I'd be able to fall asleep easier just reading about the Ten Commandments! And to my great surprise, that book has since become deeply influential in my life. Perhaps the most profound message I took away was that if there was one irredeemable sin, it was causing someone to feel disconnected from God. Anything else, God could find a way to forgive you, but causing someone to lose their connection to God was the worst of them all.

This year I have been chipping away at the Old Testament as a part of my Year 1 journey with the Education for Ministry program with Holy Apostles. Big plug for EFM, y'all. I always thought the God of the Old Testament was scary and maybe a little bipolar— he loves us but if we mess up he's gonna get us back 8 times worse. But I started to see it with a new light. He gave us lots of outs, after all.; washing with water, sacrificing an unblemished sheep, not so bad. Even Leviticus and Deuteronomy started to feel a little softer and allowed me to let God into my heart in a way I simply hadn't before.

If I had read this passage a year ago I think it would have really turned me off. The judgement of the lord never seemed to be something I felt like I desired. I'd have preferred the gold, honestly. But a years time, and maybe listening to Deacon John read it to me, softened things up just enough to really find the sweetness of honey in letting God back in. It's been a interesting year to day the least, but I think I am starting to see some of this reward the Psalms promised.



Jenna McAuley started attending Holy Apostles in the height of the pandemic when God called her to walk down a street she had never wandered before and she happened upon our beautiful little church. She lives in Ditmas Park and is blessed to be raising a 7 year-old daughter named Etta. In her spare time Jenna fights cyber-crime and visits art museums.