



Lenten Reflection for Friday, March 18th

Katie Meloney

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

Revelation 3:1 - 6

“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works; you have a name of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God. Remember then what you received and heard; obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. Yet you have still a few persons in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. If you conquer, you will be clothed like them in white robes, and I will not blot your name out of the book of life; I will confess your name before my Father and before his angels. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

It still astounds me how the right text from the Bible always finds me. I am asleep, have been asleep for two years. The shock and deep sadness I felt in 2020 when I learned that the doors of our houses of worship would not open for me – for anyone that needed entry, respite, solace – reverberated from the hairs that stood on end all over my skin to the center of my heart.

So, I tried virtual, as the churches I had been attending in Seattle and Burien dealt with scheduling miscommunications and technical difficulties. We had decided we would move back to Brooklyn. Then, in late summer, when things seemed better, I tried the local church in Ditmas Park, but soon poor mask-wearing and congregational singing despite recommendations, drove me back to virtual mass to protect my unborn son from unknown consequences. And at some point, I just stopped going. I didn't feel it. I hadn't felt it...for months. So, why open up YouTube and pretend to be in Communion with people who might not even be watching at the same time? Does one bow to the Body and Blood of Christ when it's on your computer screen and you're not watching it live? What if there's a delay? Should you genuflect in the direction of your screen or of the church? Like praying toward Mecca.

I stopped attending church on Sundays. I have been the kind of Catholic that gets up early when on

vacation to walk a mile to the church I found online so that I can be back for brunch with my hosts at 10. I find churches in countries that I visit in languages I don't understand. Here, in my hometown of Brooklyn, "the City of Churches", I stopped attending mass.

As if I had stayed up all night, the days began to run together.

Wake up. Remember.

Often, before I wake up from a dream, I realize it's not real, not right somehow, then I wake up and remember who and where I am. This two-year sleep has not been without joys. My husband and I welcomed our awe-inspiring son, who is a source of more laughter, love, and joy than we thought possible. We have reconnected with good friends who don't live close by and have even met new people, in a socially-distanced way, who will be friends for many years to come. We have been able to spend more time as a family, just the three of us (and our dog, Kai), in a way that would not have been possible under other circumstances. Though I have lost former colleagues and patients to this plague, those closest to me have mercifully been spared. For me, the dream has been pleasant with an undercurrent of wrongness, as there is in all dreams. I have and have not wanted to wake up. That moment on the edge where you could try to delve back into your dreamlife, but you feel the pull to wake up and be your true self again, to remember who you are.

I remember now, what it feels like to be in Communion with God, to feel God's guiding hand on mine, and to see in the eyes of others that they remember too. I remember being unafraid to embrace my neighbor, to welcome a stranger. I remember that there's more to love and more to protect than my family, my loved ones.

Obey and Repent.

We are all called to love our God and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are being implored to wake up, so that God does not arrive like a thief in the night, so that we know the hour of God's return. Our loving Father is gently shaking us awake from our dream, so that we may remember ourselves, obey His commandment to love God and one another, and repent our long sleep. I am trying, at last, to wake up and to make up for all the time I lost in a dream. Wake up, remember, obey, and repent.



Katie is a physician in her hometown of Brooklyn. She four Church of the Holy Apostles when she and her husband bought a quirkily designed house around the corner. Kati Peter began attending This Little Light with their son, Thae "Teddy" Meleney in the fall and are very glad they did