

A reflection on the third week of Lent

Lord, hear my cry. Ps. 130

We can't stay isolated in the wilderness forever. The wilderness is not a permanent condition but a preparation for what we are called to do in the name of God to relieve suffering in the world. Where there is pain, anguish, and distress, there also is potential for healing, joy and hope.

There is an old story of a man who once stood before God, his heart breaking from the pain and injustice of the world. He cried out to God, "Look at all the suffering, the anguish and distress in your world. Why don't you send help?" God responded, "I did send help. I sent you."

Lent is a time for us to grieve the choices we have made to follow our will rather than God's. It allows us to address with regret the opportunities we have avoided and the wrongful actions we have taken. In the words of the familiar prayer, "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."

In Lent, we are invited to reconnect with our own spark of the divine and to rediscover how to serve others in God's name. Even as sinners, through our own infirmities, failings and sorrows, and our experiences of being healed, we are able to transform hurt into hope. As we are blessed, we become a blessing.

People who have been called to Catholic health care have made a choice to be present and to serve in God's name. Think of the people with whom you serve in health care, their gentle touch, the way they listen. They have entered health care from many walks of life and they serve in many different capacities. They know the realities and

== CHA IS A ==

Passionate Voice, Valuable Resource, Vibrant Community

challenges involved in the practice of health care. They have seen many changes over the years, and they anticipate a multitude of changes to come. In the words of the poet Ann Weems, “Those who are hurt and healed, grateful and blessed, still move among us in his name.”

Lord, send your Spirit upon us, to encourage and strengthen us, to guide us in our work, and to preserve us from anything that would diminish the genuineness of our caring. May our hands bring your care, not only to those who are sick and suffering but also to one another as we share this call. Amen.

The music, by Margaret Rizza and Kevin Duncan, is from the album "Her Music for Piano," Kevin Mayhew Publishers.

==== CHA IS A ====

Passionate Voice, Valuable Resource, Vibrant Community