

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

MARCH 2, 2022

Today is Ash Wednesday. This day is the first day of Lent. Lent is the holy season that remembers the 40 years that Moses spent in the wilderness with the Hebrews and the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by Satan. For each of these people it was a struggle, but one that had many differences. For us, this will be 40 days, excluding Sundays, as we journey toward Resurrection Day, Easter. These are to be days of reflection, repentance, commitment and deeds of blessing as we prepare for the highest of High Holy Days in the Christian faith.

For Moses, the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness was a time of the spiritual formation of 600,000 men, women, and children (Exodus 12:37). The people that Moses was leading had a history of living in Egypt for more than 400 years. It had been a long time since they knew how to worship Yahweh. Refusal to follow the leading of Yahweh's directions for them resulted in the dying off of an entire generation before their entrance into the Promised Land. By the time they did enter into the Promised Land there was a new generation that had a desire to worship Yahweh.

For Jesus, the 40 days of prayer and fasting in the wilderness was a time of preparation for beginning his public ministry. It was a time of high commitment, and it was at that time that Satan appeared in an attempt to destroy the plan of God to establish a New Covenant of grace with all people. Jesus relied upon the eternal words of God to contravene the power of Satan. Because of the commitment of Jesus, we now have redemption through grace instead of Law.

For each of us these 40 days will be what we decide that they will be. Spiritual formation, the development of our spiritual lives, comes through prayer, meditation on the Word and action. Some may fast from a particular food or activity that is a favorite thing for them. Let me suggest a "fast of time" in which you give up time that you would spend on another activity to spend time reading the Word, praying in repentance and commitment, and in doing an action that blesses someone else.

Lord, today we begin a new journey with You. Order each of our steps as we walk this journey with You. Bless our lives and make of us a blessing to others. Amen.

Pastor Louise