



— AT THE —
CROSSROADS

DEVOTIONS *for* LENT

Creative
Communications
Sample

DAVID KEHRET

OUT OF STEP

Ash Wednesday

For you are dust and to dust you shall return.

GENESIS 3:19

Today we begin something that puts us totally out of step with modern life and culture. We are set apart because we give serious thought to things that our world refuses to consider. In fact, the world around us seems dedicated to distracting us from those things on which we must reflect.

“Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.” Those words, the words we must consider, are traditionally spoken on Ash Wednesday. Ashes mark our foreheads, reminding us of our vulnerability, our frail nature, our weakness, mortality and our sin.

We are free to do this because we know that the season of Lent leads us to the Festival of the Resurrection. Out of weakness, strength emerges. Out of death comes resurrection. We may be out of step with the world around us, but we are in step with our Lord as he follows the road to the cross.

Lord, help us to remember that we are dust. By your death and resurrection give us the strength to live a new life. Amen.

ON RETREAT

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Then Jesus ... was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days.

LUKE 4:1-2

The forty days of Lent are always connected with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness immediately following his baptism. We might think of this season as a forty-day retreat. Unlike Jesus, we are not seeking a wilderness. Most of us experience Lent as a spiritual retreat where we live, amid work, family, church and community.

Lent is the perfect season to consider the critical crossroads of life—losses, transitions, choices, uncertainties and disappointments—those times when faith and life intersect. Such crossroads come at any time, of course, not just during Lent. But during the forty days of Lent we are more

keenly aware that our crucified and risen Savior navigated the difficult crossroads of this world for the sake of our salvation. With his grace and forgiveness he equips us to navigate the crossroads of our own lives.

Hold your cross before me, Lord Jesus, as I face the crossroads of my life. Amen.

BAPTISMAL JOURNEY

Friday after Ash Wednesday

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death.

ROMANS 6:4

Lent is one of the oldest seasons of the Church year, nearly as old as Easter. The Festival of the Resurrection was celebrated from the earliest days of the Church. The year after that first Easter morning, the followers of Jesus surely had not forgotten the miraculous events of the previous Passover!

In the early Church it was the custom to baptize new converts on Holy Saturday, the evening before Easter Sunday. The weeks leading up to Easter were the final weeks of preparation before baptism—a time for learning, for scrutiny of life, and for disciplines like prayer, fasting and charitable works. It became obvious that such things might be good for everyone, not just those awaiting baptism. Thus, Lent was born—a forty-day baptismal journey.

Our baptism into Christ is crucial for the way in which we face the crossroads of life or assist others in facing them. Buried with Christ in baptism, we have faced the ultimate crossroad and can face the rest courageously with Christ.

Baptized and buried with you, O Christ, let me rise to new life, prepared to follow you in all things. Amen.

VALENTINE'S DAY

Saturday after Ash Wednesday

God's love has been poured into our hearts.

ROMANS 5:5

Valentine's Day is a holiday of love and friendship we celebrate with hearts of all designs. It's a day to remember the heart of God as well, with its divine design displayed for us in Christ Jesus his Son. Lent leads down the road to God's Valentine's Day—Good Friday. There the very heart of God was dramatically revealed. On the cross the heart of God is stretched out for the world to see, the love of God that spared no expense to draw us into his love.

That love of God is also fundamental to our love, especially when we become impatient and our love is stretched thin, tested in the crossroads of life. The love of God is a deep well into which we reach when our love becomes worn and fragile. The heart of God revealed at the cross is the refreshing, endless source of our love for others.

Pour your love into my heart, Lord Jesus, that I may love others from the depth of my soul, loving them as you love me. Amen.

IDENTITY CRISIS

The First Sunday in Lent

The devil said to [Jesus], "If you are the Son of God ..."

LUKE 4:3

The appointed readings for the First Sunday in Lent always tell the story of Jesus at a crossroad of his life. It happens immediately after his baptism by John in the Jordan River. There the voice of God had spoken, "You are my beloved Son."

The scene shifts to the wilderness, as Jesus is tempted by the devil. Each temptation is a challenge to that Word from God: "You are my beloved Son." Each temptation in some way invites Jesus to question that voice of God.

Every crossroad of life, every transition of faith that we face, contains within it the same question—who are we? Below the surface lie deeper

questions: Will we trust the voice of God? Will we trust who God says we are? Will we trust who God says he is for us? The answers to those questions will equip us to face the temptations lying in wait at every crossroad.

Dear Savior, help us find our identity in you, that we might more fully reflect your saving love to the world. Amen.

OUR BAPTISMAL IDENTITY

Monday, the First Week in Lent

But you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons.

ROMANS 8:15

The temptations faced by Jesus in the wilderness involved in some way the question of his identity as the Son of God. At every crossroad of our lives the question waits—who are we? We understand the identity we each receive through time and place and family. As Christians, we also must consider the identity we received when we were baptized into Christ. Adopted by God as his children, we now live in this world as daughters and sons of God.

Every crossroad of life challenges that identity. Am I really who God says I am, his daughter or son? Do I really need to consider that identity as I try to sort out the difficult decisions I face? Wouldn't it just be simpler to forget all that and muddle on through?

My identity as God's child does complicate things in a world that denies its relationship to God. But my identity as God's baptized and forgiven child is the key to finding my way—his way—as I follow my Lord during this season of Lent and through each crossroad of life.

Heavenly Father, help me to remember that I am your child. Amen.

BEING JESUS

Tuesday, the First Week in Lent

As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.

JOHN 20:21

Baptized into Christ, we stand before God wearing the righteousness of Christ as a garment. Clothed in Christ we stand before God not only

AT THE CROSSROADS

By David Kehret

Lent is the perfect season to consider the critical crossroads of life—losses, transitions, choices, uncertainties and disappointments—those times when faith and life intersect. These devotions for Lent by Rev. David Kehret, an experienced campus minister, help us to become more keenly aware that our crucified and risen Savior navigated the difficult crossroads of this world for the sake of our salvation, equipping us to navigate the crossroads of our own lives.

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