



Ravensworth Baptist Church
5100 Ravensworth Road, Annandale, VA 22003
ravensworthbaptist.org

“Persist. Persevere. Endure.” Benedict uttered these words centuries ago and they are still speaking. As we leap into this adventure during Lent of Reclaiming our Souls, we do so with Benedict’s words ringing in our ears—this is hard work, holy work, and we do it in community.

“To bear bad things, evil things well, is for Benedict a mark of humility, a mark of Christian maturity. It is a dour and difficult notion for the modern Christian to accept. The goal of the twenty-first century is to cure all diseases, order all inefficiency, topple all obstacles, end all stress, and prescribe immediate panaceas. We wait for nothing and put up with little and abide less and react with fury at irritations. We are a people without patience. We do not tolerate process. We cannot stomach delay. Persist. Persevere. Endure, Benedict says. It is good for the soul to temper it. God does not come on hoofbeats of mercury through streets of gold. God is in the dregs of our lives. That’s why it takes humility to find God where God is not expected to be.”

Joan Chittister
*The Rule of Benedict:
A Spirituality For The 21st Century**, p.88

*The Benedictine order was founded by Benedict about 1500 years ago.

Reclaiming Our Souls: Lenten Devotional

Week One: Mark 1

Questions and Prayer for the Week How does Mark begin his gospel? How does it settle with you on your Lenten journey? As you commit to reading through Mark during Lent, what do you find stirring within you?

Open my eyes to see the ongoing story of God in the world. May it nourish my soul. Amen.

February 14, Ash Wednesday: Read Mark 1:1-3

February 15: Read Mark 1:4-11

February 16: Read Mark 1:12-15

February 17: Read Mark 1:16-20

February 18, First Sunday in Lent: Read Mark 1:21-28

February 19: Read Mark 1:29-34

February 20: Read Mark 1:35

February 21: Read Mark 1:36-39

February 22: Read Mark 1:40-45

February 23: Reflect on the passages from Mark. What themes have emerged? What is Jesus up to?

February 24: Re-read Mark 1.

Week Two: Mark 2-3

Questions and Prayer for the Week As you begin the second week of Lent, what have you noticed about the state of your soul? Are you unsettled? Hopeful? Fearful? Mark was writing to an anxious group of people who didn't know what was coming next from the Roman Empire. How might that frame Mark's tone?

God, when I feel anxious, remind me that you are with me. Remind me of hope and that my church family is alongside me in great sorrow and great joy. May this nourish my soul. Amen.

February 25, Second Sunday in Lent: Read Mark 2: 1-14

February 26: Read Mark 2:15-22

February 27: Read Mark 2:23-28

February 28: Read Mark 3:1-12

March 1: Read Mark 3:13-30

March 2: Read Mark 3:31-35

March 3: Re-read Mark 3 and 4. Where has Jesus gone? Who has he encountered? Who is recognizing him?

Week Three: Mark 4-5

Questions and Prayer for the Week In the third week of Lent, we'll find that Jesus starts to move into larger crowds in the Gospel of Mark. How did the crowds receive him? Do you notice any crowd mentality? How might this have impacted Jesus and the disciples?

God, during this week of Lent, remind me to nourish the souls of others even as I tend to my own. Amen.

March 4, Third Sunday in Lent: Read Mark 4:1-12

March 5: Read Mark 4:13-25

March 6: Read Mark 4:26-34

March 7: Read Mark 4:35-41

March 8: Read Mark 5:1-20

March 9: Read Mark 5:21-43

March 10: Re-read Mark 4-5. Jesus is beginning to gain more of a following. Who does he encounter in these chapters? How does he engage with people? How do the disciples respond? What is the pace of the gospel of Mark?

Week Four: Mark 6-8

Questions and Prayer for the Week We are now well into the Lenten season and the gospel of Mark. What are you noticing within yourself as you read? Have you found moments to reclaim your soul?

God, in the stillness and the calm, you are with me. In the loudness and the chaos you are with me. May this nourish my soul. Amen.

March 11, Fourth Sunday in Lent: Read Mark 6:1-13

March 12: Read Mark 6:14-29

March 13: Read Mark 6:30-56

March 14: Read Mark 7:1-30

March 15: Read Mark 7:31-8:21

March 16: Read Mark 8:22-38

March 17: Re-read Mark 6-8. Where have Jesus and the disciples traveled in these weeks? With whom is Jesus spending time? What is your favorite passage you read this week and why did you connect with it?

Week Five: Mark 9-10

Questions and Prayer for the Week Mark is moving us to the height of the his gospel as we approach Jerusalem with Jesus and the disciples. What emotions are present in the gospel passages? What emotions are present within you this week?

God, give me ears to hear and eyes to see your Spirit at work in the world. May it nourish my soul. Amen.

March 18, Fifth Sunday in Lent: Read Mark 9:1-13

March 19: Read Mark 9:14-29

March 20: Read Mark 9:30-50

March 21: Read Mark 10:1-16

March 22: Read Mark 10:17-31

March 23: Read Mark 10:32-52

March 24: Re-read Mark 9-10. Jesus is ruffling more religious feathers! Has he ruffled yours? Where did you bristle against what Jesus was saying? Where did you hear good news?

Holy Week: Mark 11-15

Questions and Prayer for the Week We are entering Holy Week, Jesus' last week. There will be moments of great drama, sadness, and hope. As you read these passages, try to read them and sit with them. They will be familiar texts. As you've worked through the entirety of Mark, do these familiar stories read differently? How do they fit into Mark's overall narrative?

God, we turn to Jerusalem with Jesus. Christ have mercy on me, a sinner. Amen.

March 25, Palm Sunday: Read Mark 11:1-19

March 26: Read Mark 11:20-12:34

March 27: Read Mark 12:35-44

March 28: Read Mark 13

March 29, Maundy Thursday: Read Mark 14

March 30, Good Friday: Read Mark 15

March 31, Holy Saturday: Sit in the silence of this day.

Easter Sunday

Questions and Prayer for Easter Mark's account of Easter morning is different than other gospels. How do you encounter this version of the story? What feelings arise as you read it?

Resurrected Christ, you are with us! We live out the story of what resurrection looks like. May it nourish our souls. Amen.

April 1, Easter Sunday: Read Mark 16:1-8

Reflections