

## Bo's Blog

This is the time of year when I've learned that I have to make a choice. The short daylight hours, the day after day of cold, often overcast, and even rainy, can get a person down. There's even a diagnosis for it Affective Disorder, or SAD (I'm not making that up). So, if I begin to feel down at this time of year, I've realized that I have to make a choice. Do I focus on all the cold and dark of the past weeks and months, or do I look forward to the warm sunny days that are getting closer. It's kind of like the glass half empty, glass half full choice, only in this case the glass is continually getting more full (or more empty, whichever works better for you). Do I look forward to the positive, or stay stuck in the negative?

Looking forward this month, we begin the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>. Lent has a reputation that's kind of on the negative, or down, side. For one thing, we often talk about giving something up for Lent, usually something we like that's bad for our health like chocolate or ice cream. But there's also another way of looking at Lent. Lent is based on the story of Jesus spending 40 days in the wilderness. That's why Lent begins 40 days (not including Sundays) before Easter. We often refer to this story as the temptation of Jesus. But what Jesus talks about in his responses to the temptations, is the importance of God in our lives. He takes the negatives of his situation—his hunger and the temptations offered him—and instead responds with the positive of the importance of God in his life. Perhaps this year, instead of giving something up for Lent, we might consider the positive response of adding something to our life, something that helps remind us more of God's presence in our life. The Upper Room is one way to do that. Reading the brief scripture passage, story, and prayer brings our relationship to God to the forefront of our daily routine for a moment more each day than we may usually experience it. Or if you're already doing that, try adding a brief prayer or scripture reading to your morning or evening routine each day. The idea is to add something that brings God more to the forefront of your life and your thoughts. Choosing the positive. Looking forward. The daffodils will be coming up soon.

Shalom,

Bo