



# Daily Reflections

## February 21, 2018

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### Scripture

#### **Jonah 3: 1-10**

The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time:

"Set out for the great city of Nineveh,  
and announce to it the message that I will tell you."

So Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh,  
according to the LORD's bidding.

Now Nineveh was an enormously large city;  
it took three days to go through it.

Jonah began his journey through the city,  
and had gone but a single day's walk announcing,  
"Forty days more and Nineveh shall be destroyed,"  
when the people of Nineveh believed God;  
they proclaimed a fast

and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.

When the news reached the king of Nineveh,  
he rose from his throne, laid aside his robe,  
covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in the ashes.

Then he had this proclaimed throughout Nineveh,  
by decree of the king and his nobles:

"Neither man nor beast, neither cattle nor sheep,  
shall taste anything;

they shall not eat, nor shall they drink water.

Man and beast shall be covered with sackcloth and call loudly to God;  
every man shall turn from his evil way

and from the violence he has in hand.

Who knows, God may relent and forgive, and withhold his blazing wrath, so that we shall not perish."

When God saw by their actions how they turned from their evil way, he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do to them; he did not carry it out.

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## **Our Scripture Reflection**

That the pagan Ninevites repented at the half-hearted call from the Prophet Jonah angered Jonah who wanted them to burn. After all they had a reputation for extreme cruelty, even child sacrifice. But their repentance pleased God and that's all that mattered. The Book of Jonah serves to remind us that God wants all people to be saved, including you and me. Our repentance, therefore, must always be accompanied by a heart filled with gratitude.

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## **Food for your Journey**

Historian Henry Chadwick discusses the radical transformation that occurred in the fourth century when the masses, who previously had worshipped pagan gods, filled the churches. The bishops of the church tried to get the masses to give up their pagan cults with their promises of "success in love and fertility, in commerce and in health." But bishops "quickly found their people determined to have such things and ready to say (as Augustine reports) that 'the Church's God was good for salvation in the next world, but one had better keep in with the old gods for success in this one.' Augustine often laments the half-heartedness of many who have been baptized but who have not been touched to the heart, and sees an image of the Church in St. Peter's ship so weighed down with the fish that it began to sink."

--Times Literary Supplement,

5 April 1985, 379-80

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## **A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear Jesus, Please give me the Grace to hear and heed Your call to repentance. May I use this Lenten season to unite my heart to Your heart. Amen