

This new quarterly publication by Integrity<sup>USA</sup> is intended to be a spiritual resource for our Proud Parish Partners, their clergy, and their people. Please feel free to use it as the basis for a sermon or adult education session.

## "I had forgotten how easy it is to forget"

By The Rev. Susan Russell

A few weeks ago I found myself sitting in yet-another circle of chairs in yet-another parish hall with a stick-on name tag on my shirt and an agenda in my hand, listening to yet-another facilitator explain what the "hoped-for outcomes" were for our time together.


This time it was a gathering of national faith leaders coming together to debrief the failure of the No on Proposition 8 campaign to fend off marriage discrimination here in California and we were *not* a cheerful lot.

And then Deborah Johnson, our facilitator, read us this poem by Howard Thurman:

Despite the dullness and barrenness of the days that pass,  
if I search with due diligence,  
I can always find a deposit left by some former radiance.  
But I had forgotten.  
At the time it was full-orbed, glorious, and resplendent.  
I was sure that I would never forget.  
In the moment of its fullness,  
I was sure it would illumine my path for all the rest of

my journey.  
I had forgotten how easy it is to forget.  
There was no intent to betray what seemed so sure at the time.  
My response was whole, clean, authentic.  
But little by little, there crept into my life the dust and grit of the journey.  
Details, lower-level demands, all kinds of cross currents--  
nothing momentous, nothing overwhelming, nothing flagrant--- just wear and tear.  
If there had been some direct challenge-- a clear cut issue--  
I would have fought it to the end, and beyond.  
In the quietness of this place,  
surrounded by the all-pervading Presence of God, my heart whispers:  
Keep fresh before me the moments of my High Resolve,  
that in fair weather or foul, in good times or in tempests,  
in the days when the darkness and the foe are nameless or familiar,  
I may not forget that to which my life is committed.  
Keep fresh before me  
The moments of high resolve.

*["The Moments of High Resolve"  
by Howard Thurman from  
"For The Inward Journey"]*



No good thing will God withhold from those  
who walk with integrity. Psalm 84:11

# Reflections

And I thought of those moments of high resolve that had brought us “thus far on the way”-and I resolved not to forget how easy it is to forget them.

And so, as we walk together as a people of God on the 40 day Lenten journey, let’s resolve to do that together. Let’s resolve to make time for conversation and quiet, for reflection and reconnection, for solitude and solidarity.

In the busyness of our lives, in the challenges of our times, in the opportunities of our ministries, let’s treasure this annual gift of this time set aside to intentionally remember what we have forgotten how easy it is to forget:

- How beloved we are by the God who loved us enough to become one of us in order to show us how to walk in love with each other.
- How privileged we are to be bearers of the Good News of God in Christ Jesus into a world yearning for the hope it offers.
- How important it is to keep before us those moments of high resolve that feed and fuel us as we go about this work we have been given to do: making God’s love tangible 24/7.

Let us-together-resolve to make this Lent a season of keeping fresh before us our own moments of high resolve as we journey together to Easter and beyond!

## About the Author

*Susan Russell is the President of Integrity and a priest on the staff of All Saints, Pasadena CA.*

## Sample Discussion Questions

1. Identify some of “dust and grit” and “wear and tear” of your journey. Why and how can it help remind you of God’s presence in your life?
2. How does the idea of “Lenten Discipline” fit with this reflection?
3. In what ways can you intentionally remind yourself, and those around you, of the three bullet point above?

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