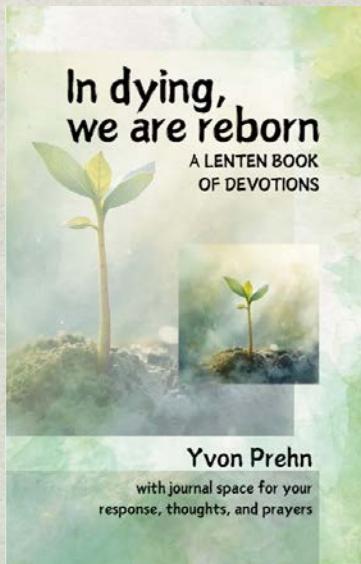


In dying we are reborn, a Lenten book of devotions

with journal space for your response, thoughts, and prayers

By
Yvon Prehn



Published by the Lion's Voice

In dying we are reborn, a Lenten book of devotions

January 2026

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The title is a reworking of the line in the prayer by St. Francis, that "In dying we are born into eternal life." It seemed fitting for Lenten thoughts as we look to the celebration of resurrection at Easter.

Scripture versions and citations

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Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.





Lent isn't about us; it's a refocus on Jesus

It's been a hard year. But we are still here, and we are still trying to serve Jesus as best we can.

Yet, it's a time when a statement like, "I'll give up sugar for Lent," or something similar, seems almost sacrilegious.

This Lent I want to dig deeper beyond some simple denial that, in the back of my mind is if I'm honest, about losing weight.

I'm not sure as we begin, what a deeper approach to Lent means, but I tend to sort out questions in my spiritual life as I journal, so this book contains space for you and me to do that as a way of digging deeper. The devotional challenges are quotes I found that I want to consider more. The comments before the journaling section are questions I'm asking myself.

There are 40 days of quotes and journal prompts. You can start using this journal on Ash Wednesday and use it until Holy Saturday, the day before Easter.

Traditionally, you can take off Sundays because, as the Catholic Church puts it, "Sundays, even during Lent, are a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and are not part of the penitential season. We rejoice in the resurrection of the Lord on Sundays." If you feel that forsaking your Lenten sacrifices on Sundays is like cheating, then you are encouraged to maintain your sacrifices.

My prayer is that in digging deeper we all grow closer Jesus, whatever that means in the intimate relationship between you and Him. Read, think, pray, and listen to what He says to you. Then obey what He tells you as you walk in the new life He gives.

Grace & peace,
Yvon Prehn



Have patience
with all things,
but first
of all with
yourself.

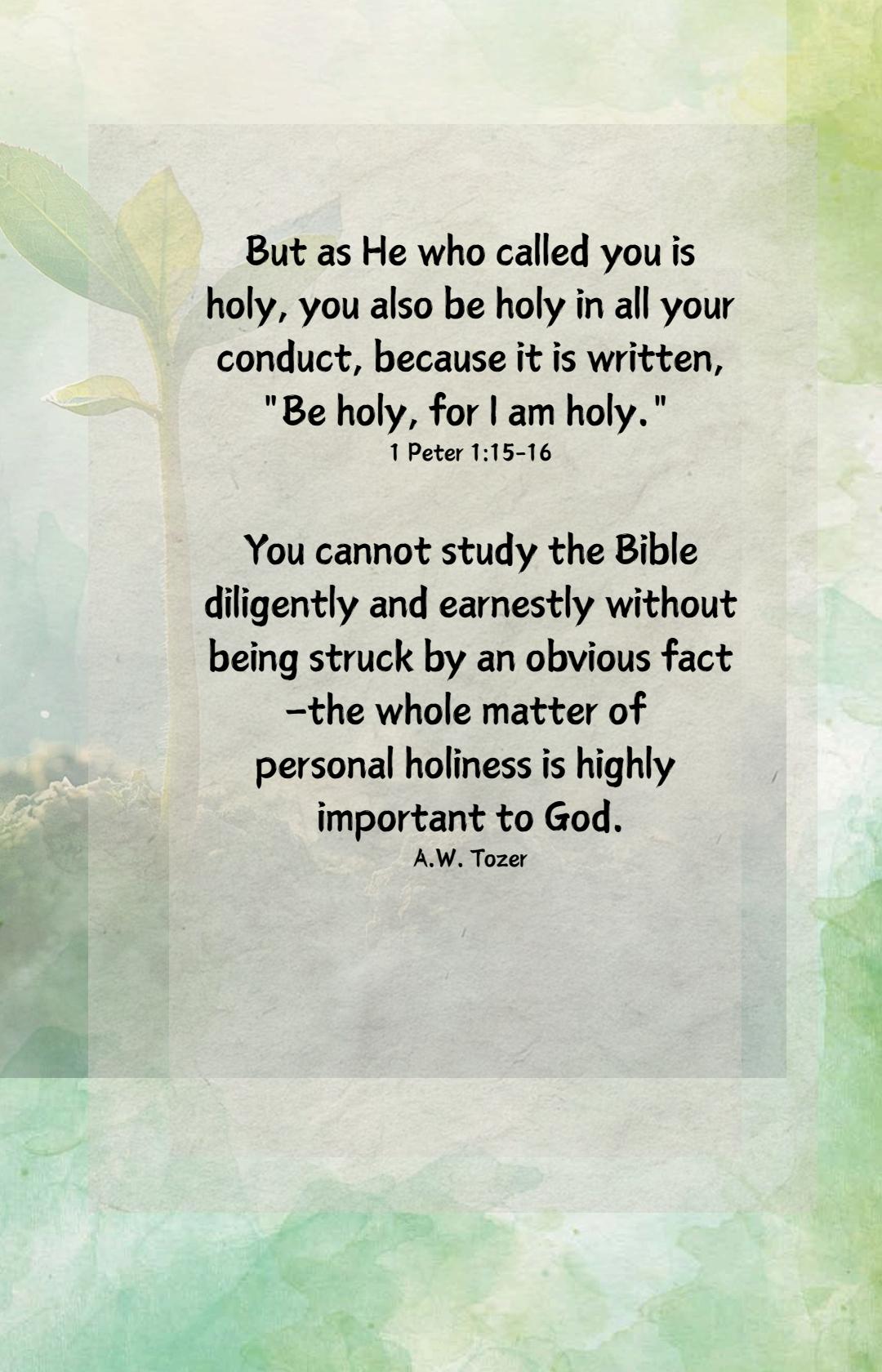
St. Francis de Sales

DAY 1

Lent will last for 40 days (plus the Sundays) and if we apply ourselves to spiritual examination and renewal, we will make changes. But they might only be the start of changes and we must be at peace in knowing that.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

1 Peter 1:15-16

You cannot study the Bible diligently and earnestly without being struck by an obvious fact –the whole matter of personal holiness is highly important to God.

A.W. Tozer

DAY 2

To be holy means to be set apart. Today that might mean some very different attitudes and actions than the people around you. Consider the ways your life might be different if you considered yourself set apart for God's service.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





I do not consider myself
yet to have
taken hold of it.
But one thing I do:
Forgetting what is behind
and straining toward
what is ahead,
I press on toward the goal
to win the prize for
which God has called me
heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14

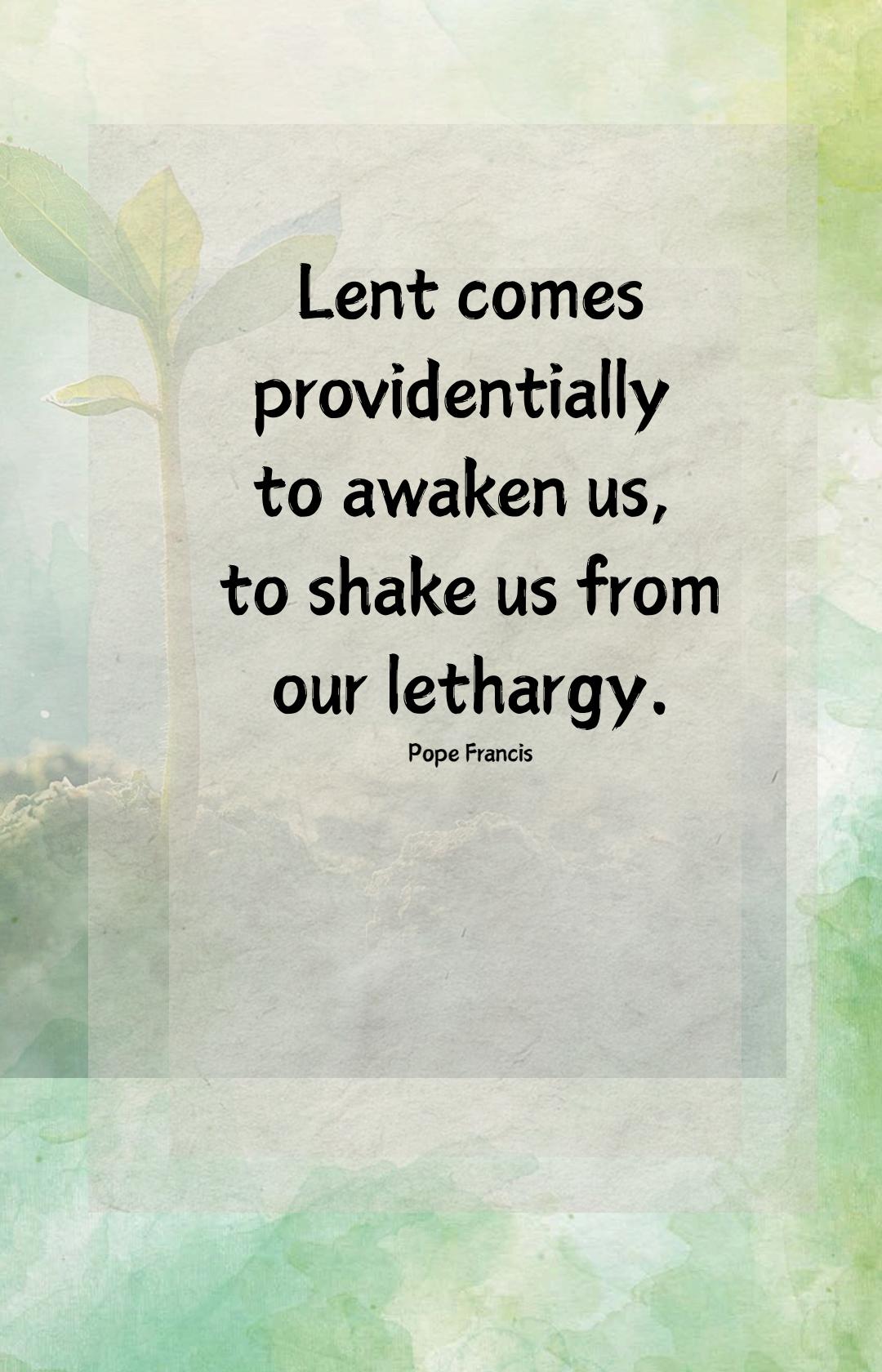
DAY 3

One of the **MOST** important things we can do to improve our spiritual and relational lives is to "leave the past behind."

Our future is glorious,
tomorrow and forever with Jesus and
we need to focus on that.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Lent comes
providentially
to awaken us,
to shake us from
our lethargy.

Pope Francis

DAY 4

Do you ever feel like you are sleepwalking in life? Or maybe numb?

Use Lent to feel even if it hurts and to allow Jesus to work on issues in your life that may be too painful to tackle on your own.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





But be on your guard.
Don't let the sharp edge of
your expectation get dulled by
parties and drinking
and shopping.

Otherwise, that Day is going to
take you by complete surprise,
spring on you suddenly
like a trap, . . .

Pray constantly that you will
have the strength and wits to
make it through everything
that's coming and end up on
your feet before the
Son of Man."

Luke 21:34-36 (MSG)

DAY 5

We will all face Jesus someday.
That meeting should be the North Star of our lives.
That meeting should inform our dreams,
shape our desires, guide our work.
Consider how you can keep that North Star
in focus as you travel in life.

Your response, thoughts, prayers



"Good and evil both increase at compound interest.

That is why the little decisions you and I make every day are of such infinite importance.

The smallest good act today is the capture of a strategic point from which, a few months later, you may be able to go on to victories you never dreamed of. An apparently trivial indulgence in lust or anger today is the loss of a ridge or railway line or bridgehead from which the enemy may launch an attack otherwise impossible."

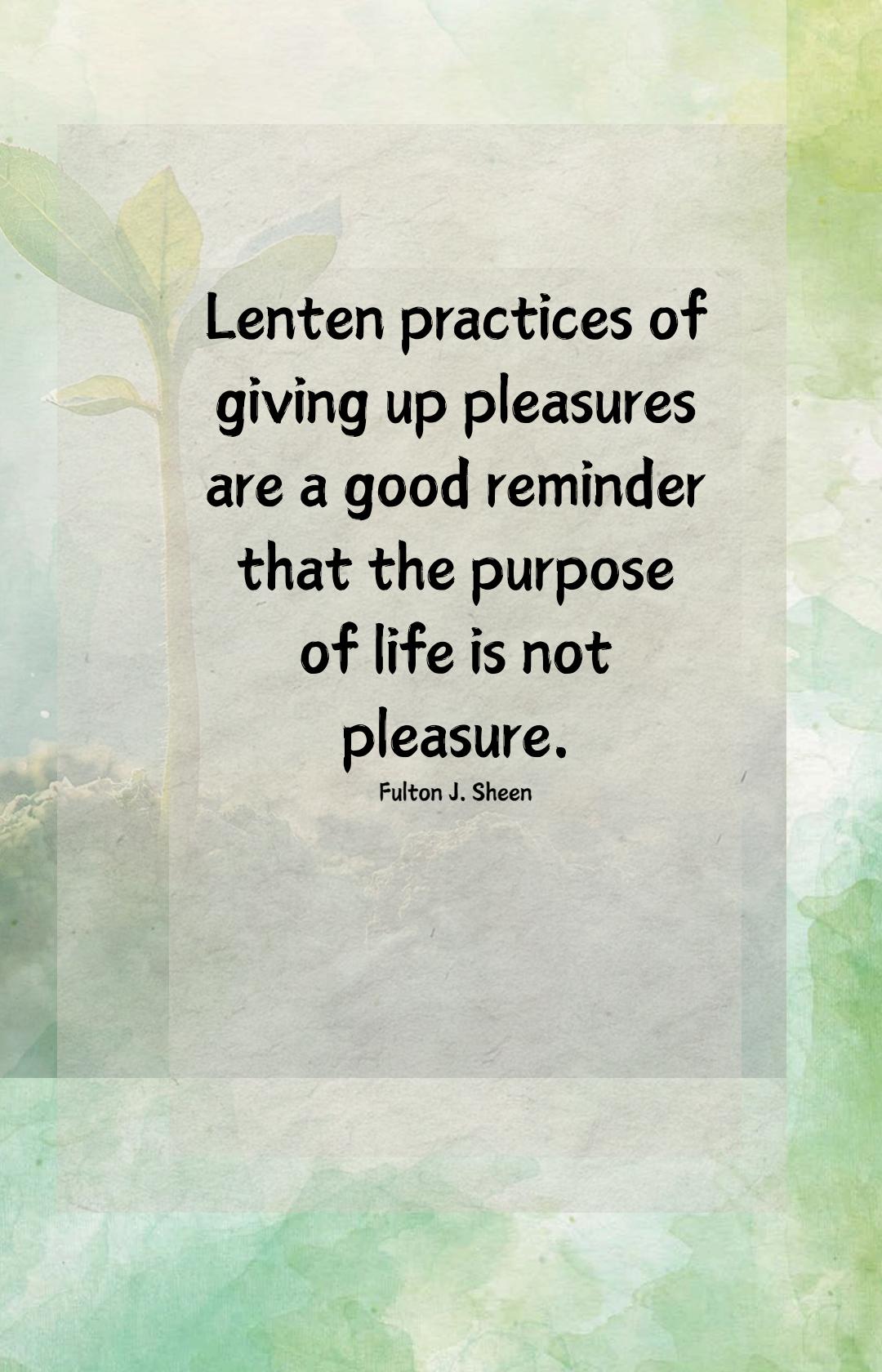
C.S. Lewis

DAY 6

Our life is built moment by moment,
decision by decision.
Don't rush unthinkingly through your days.
Be deliberate, good, and godly in your actions, no
matter how small they seem and you'll build
a life pleasing to God.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Lenten practices of
giving up pleasures
are a good reminder
that the purpose
of life is not
pleasure.

Fulton J. Sheen

DAY 7

That the purpose of life is not pleasure
would be a big surprise to many.
But to the Christian,
the greater emotion of joy is the reward
when the purpose
of our life is to please God.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Only
changed people
can change
the world.

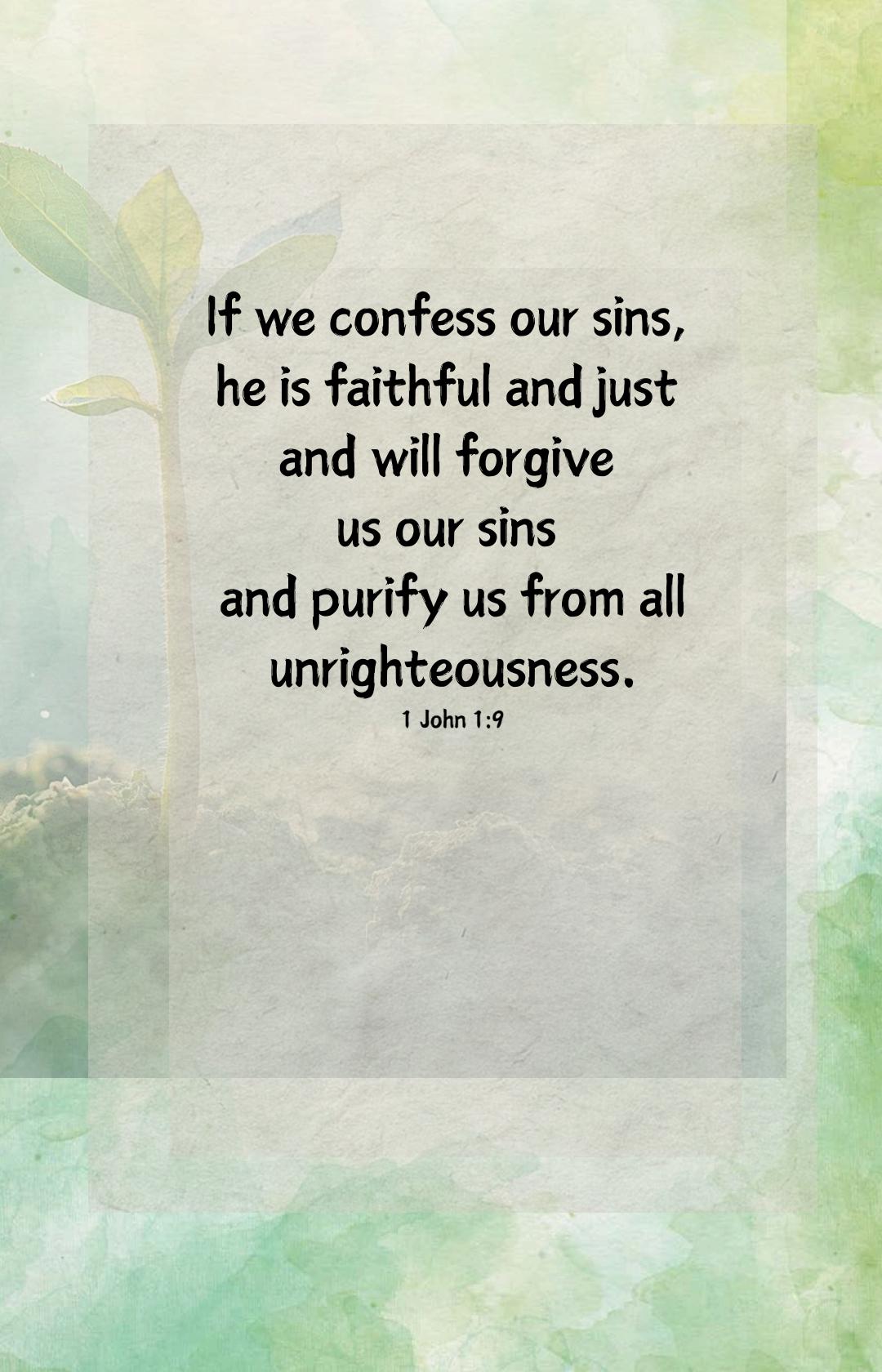
Rick Warren

DAY 8

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
the new creation has come.
The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Cor.5:17)."
You are a changed person!
What changes do you want to make in
your world for Jesus' sake?

Your response, thoughts, prayers





If we confess our sins,
he is faithful and just
and will forgive
us our sins
and purify us from all
unrighteousness.

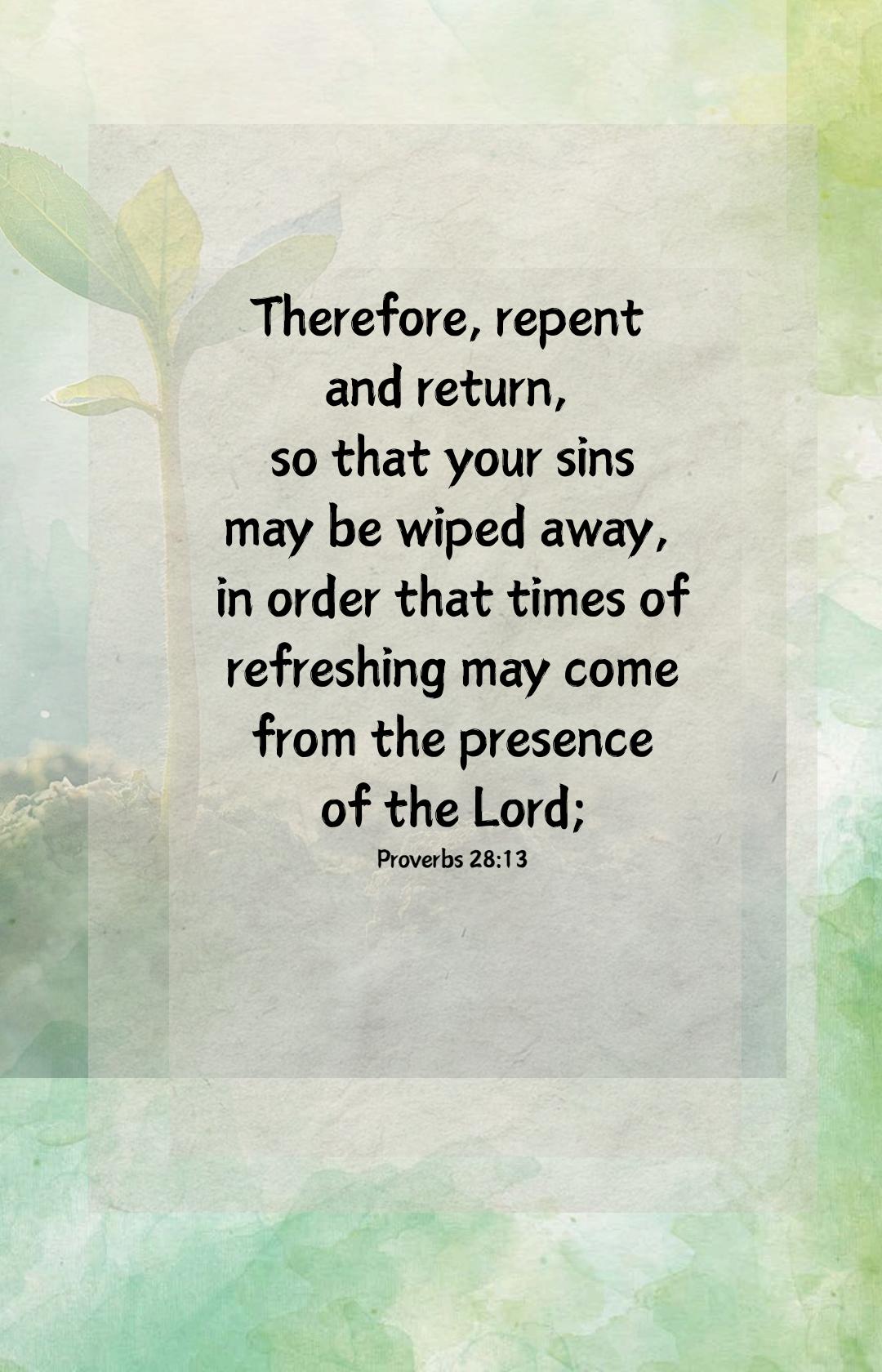
1 John 1:9

DAY 9

When we confess we have sinned and specifically name that sin, we are acknowledging that there is Someone above us who sets the standard for what is right and what is wrong. And when we do that, He makes us clean.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Therefore, repent
and return,
so that your sins
may be wiped away,
in order that times of
refreshing may come
from the presence
of the Lord;

Proverbs 28:13

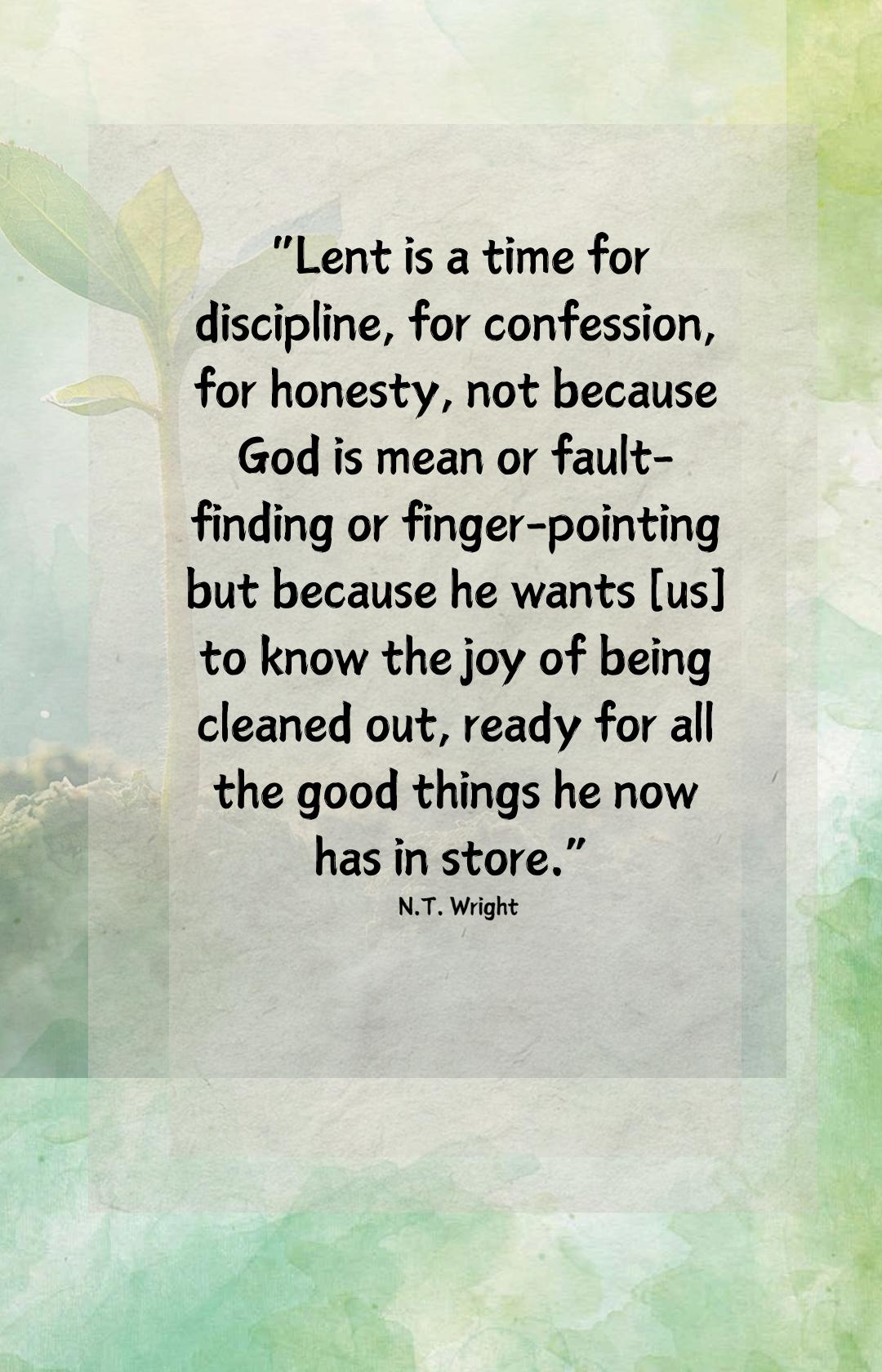
DAY 10

Lent should be a time of great refreshing,
a spring cleaning of our lives and souls.

We can clear out
burdensome grudges,
mental messiness, and hoarded bad habits.
When we do that, we can then breathe.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





"Lent is a time for discipline, for confession, for honesty, not because God is mean or fault-finding or finger-pointing but because he wants [us] to know the joy of being cleaned out, ready for all the good things he now has in store."

N.T. Wright

DAY 11

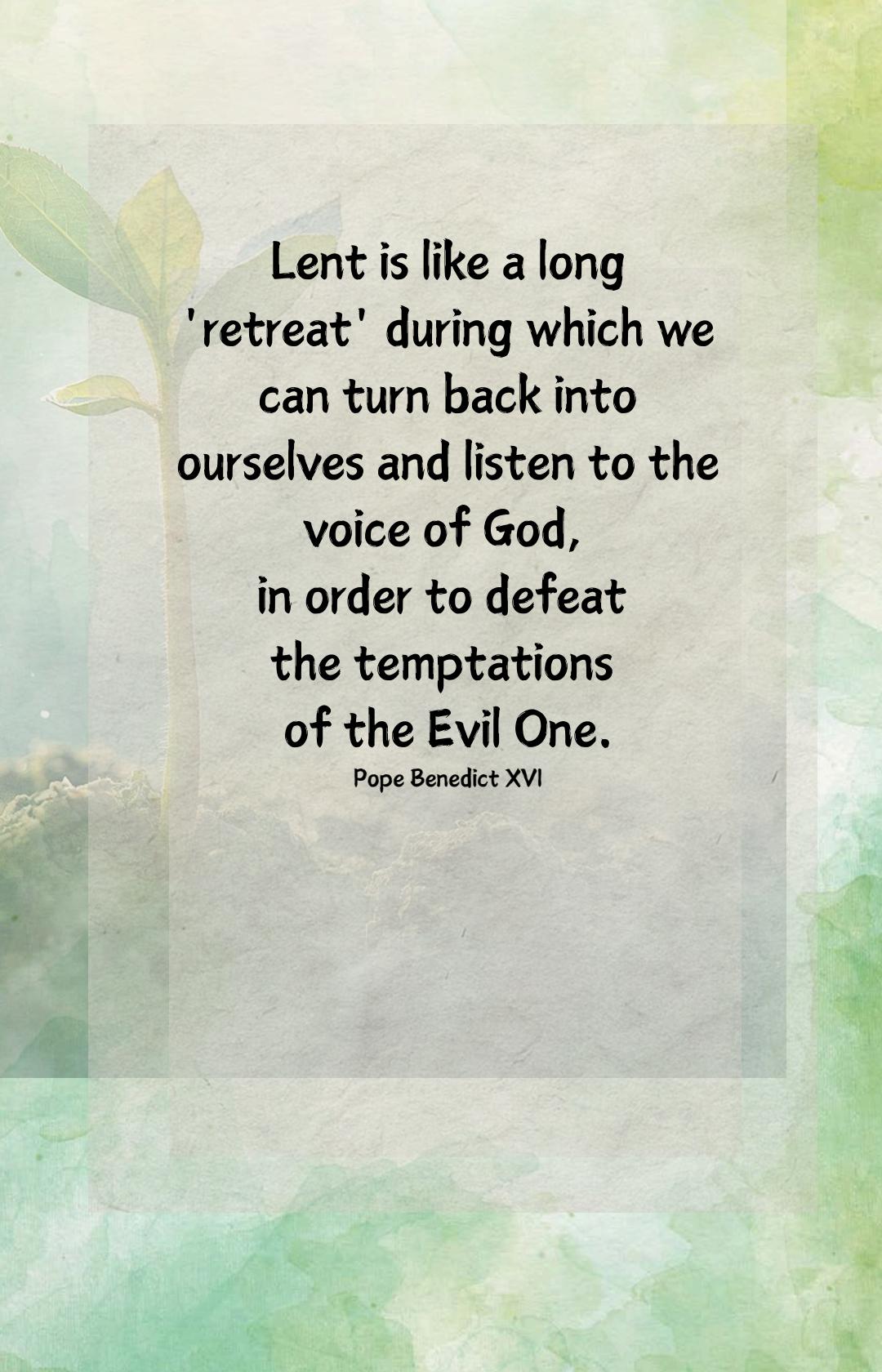
How would your life be different if you lived a carefully disciplined life?

2 Timothy 1:7 says, "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

Live into that reality.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





**Lent is like a long
'retreat' during which we
can turn back into
ourselves and listen to the
voice of God,
in order to defeat
the temptations
of the Evil One.**

Pope Benedict XVI

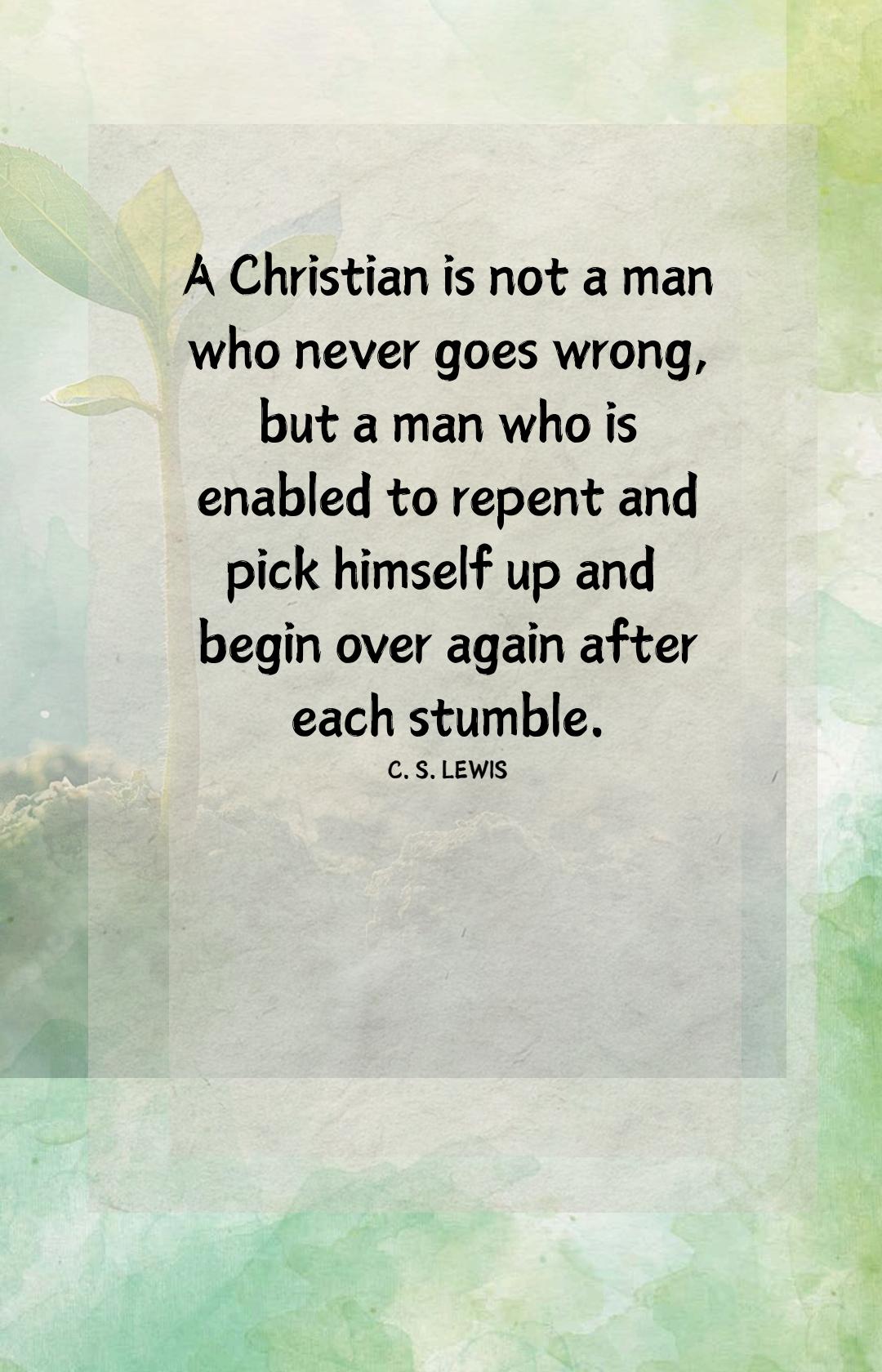
DAY 12

God does speak to his people.
He speaks with a clear inner voice if you quiet
yourself enough to listen.

The boy Samuel said, "Speak Lord, your servant is listening (2 Sam. 3:9)." When we pray that, we must be prepared to obey.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





A Christian is not a man
who never goes wrong,
but a man who is
enabled to repent and
pick himself up and
begin over again after
each stumble.

C. S. LEWIS

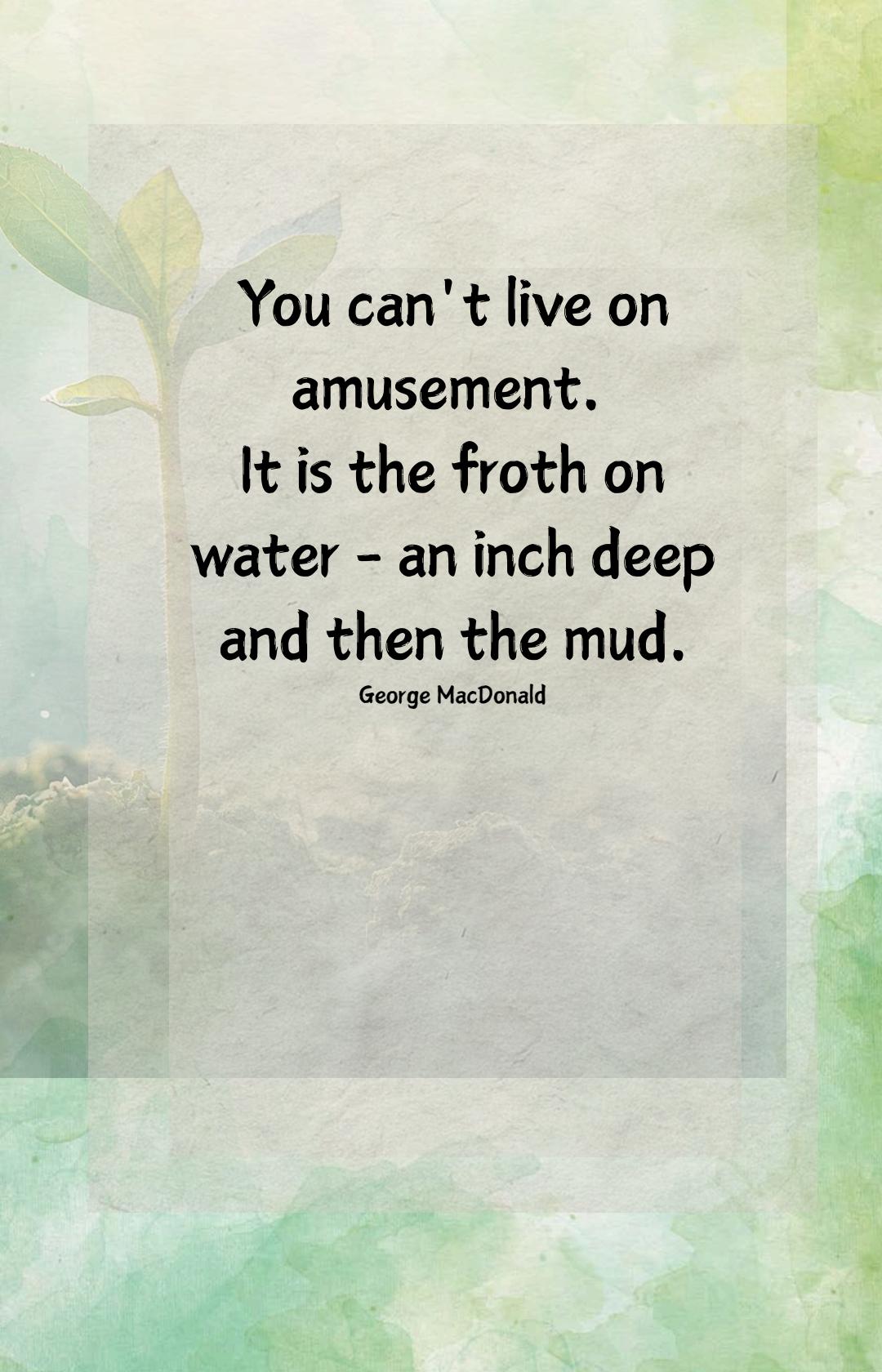
DAY 13

Remember that Jesus told Peter he had to forgive 7x70, which meant an infinite number of times.

That is how much God will forgive you.
When you fall again and again and again,
He is always ready to forgive.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





You can't live on
amusement.
It is the froth on
water - an inch deep
and then the mud.

George MacDonald

DAY 14

Take some time to evaluate what in your life is froth and what is the mud that underlies it after the froth floats away.

What is an exchange you can make for an activity that has eternal value?

Your response, thoughts, prayers





"I imagine Lent for you and for me as a great departure from the greedy, anxious anti-neighborliness of our economy, a great departure from our exclusionary politics that fears the other, a great departure from self-indulgent consumerism that devours creation.

Walter Brueggemann

DAY 15

Being greedy at its core means
we aren't trusting God.

We can be greedy with possessions, with time, with love. As you think about this statement, think about when you may have been greedy and how to change that.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means.

This is an obvious lie.

Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is... A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later.

That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in.

C. S. Lewis

What would it be like to resist a temptation
that you easily give in to?
God says he will always provide a way to escape
and I imagine we might take it
more if we thought ahead of time what those
escapes might look like.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





And so, dear brothers, I plead with
you to give your bodies to God.
Let them be a living sacrifice, holy,
the kind he can accept.

When you think of what he has
done for you, is this
too much to ask?

Don't copy the behavior and
customs of this world, but be a
new and different person with a
fresh newness

in all you do and think. Then you
will learn from your own experience
how his ways will really satisfy you.

Romans 12:1-2 (TLB)

DAY 17

One of the great surprises of the Christian life is that whenever we think we are giving up something for God and fear we will be empty, God fills us in ways we didn't expect. Not always with what we wanted, but always what we needed.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





During these 40 days,
let me put away
all my pride.

Let me change my
heart and give up all
that is not good
within me.

Let me love God with
all that I am and all
that I have.

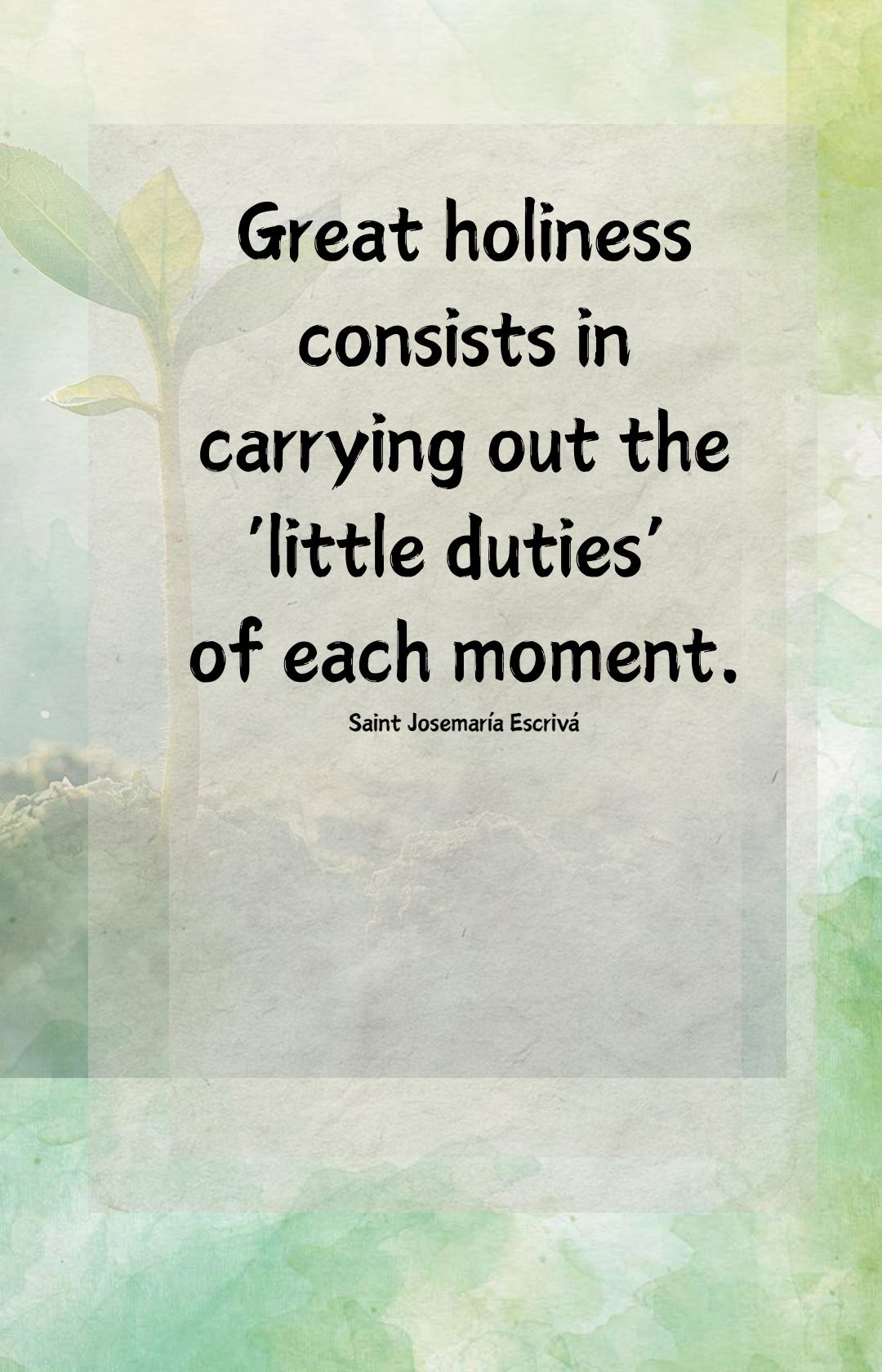
Genesis Grain

DAY 18

Loving God is not a mushy emotion or a feeling we work up during times like Lent. Jesus very clearly told His disciples in John 14:23 "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching." Obedience is truly loving God.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Great holiness
consists in
carrying out the
'little duties'
of each moment.

Saint Josemaría Escrivá

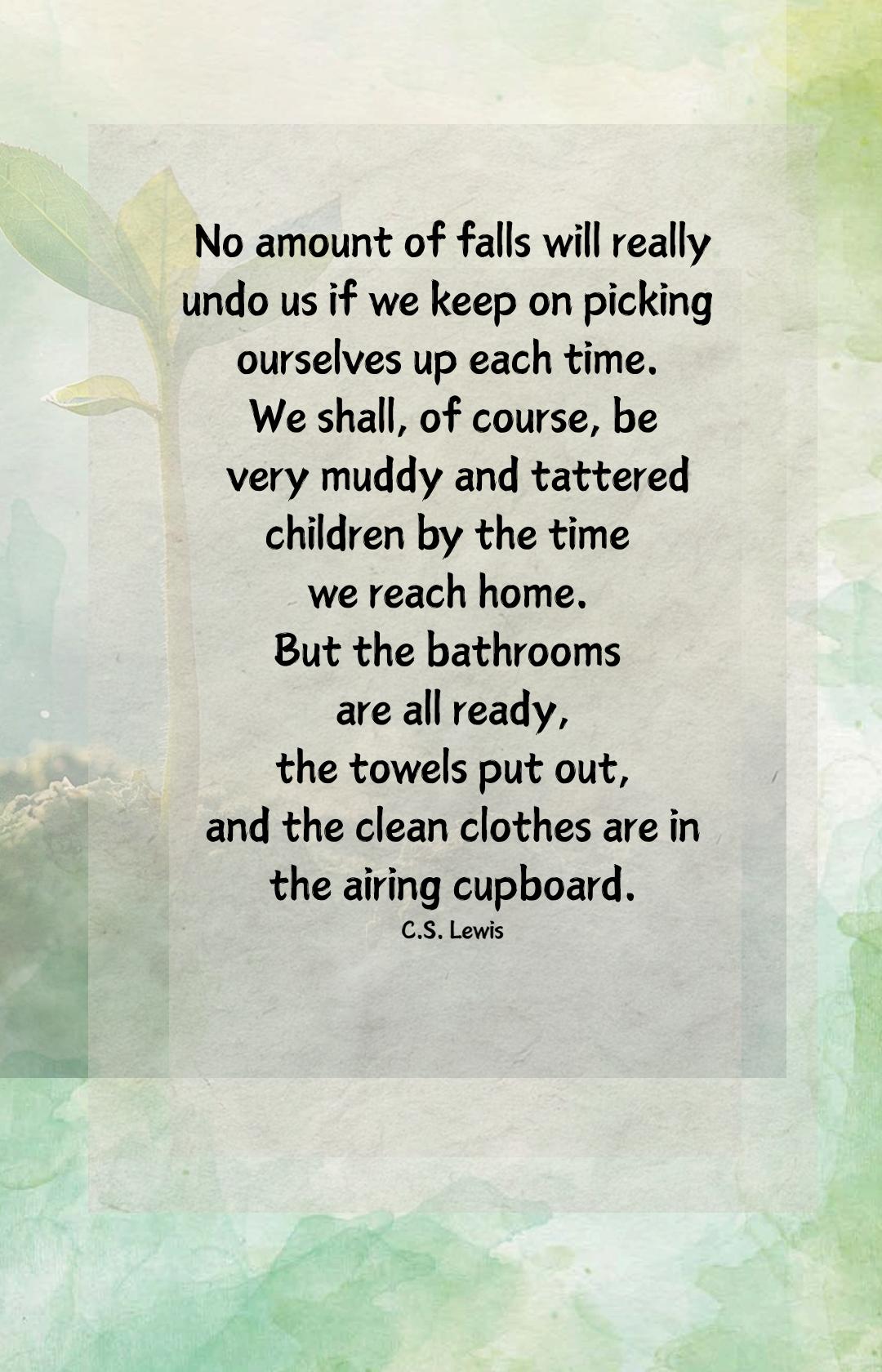
DAY 19

Every little action makes a difference in the direction of our lives.

Being quiet when we want to be mean or accepting
when we want to be picky, each turning towards
God's way instead of our own,
sets our course towards holiness more surely.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





No amount of falls will really
undo us if we keep on picking
ourselves up each time.

We shall, of course, be
very muddy and tattered
children by the time
we reach home.

But the bathrooms
are all ready,
the towels put out,
and the clean clothes are in
the airing cupboard.

C.S. Lewis

DAY 20

How wonderful it is to know we
don't have to clean up ourselves for God.
"Muddy and tattered,"
He loves us and will welcome us
every time we turn to Him and ultimately
into His forever home.

Your response, thoughts, prayers



The Fasting Life, part one

Fast from judging others;

Feast on Christ dwelling in them.

Fast from fear of illness;

Feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute;

Feast on speech that purifies.

Fast from discontent;

Feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger;

Feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism;

Feast on hope.

Fast from negatives;

Feast on encouragement.

DAY 21

We can't focus on a behavior or attitude
we want to give up or
it will take up more and more space in our minds.
Instead, focus on the options in this list.
Take one or two and pray about them, think of
them until they are a part of your life.

Your response, thoughts, prayers



The Fasting Life, part two

Fast from bitterness;

Feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern;

Feast on compassion.

Fast from suspicion;

Feast on truth.

Fast from gossip;

Feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from problems that
overwhelm;

Feast on prayer that sustains.

Fast from anxiety;

Feast on faith.

Author Unknown

DAY 22

We are the result of our thoughts and our thoughts
are under our control.

Choose to think of the positive things on this list.

Journal here how your life would look if they were a consistent part of it and pray it will be so.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





If you've gotten anything
at all out of following Christ, if his
love has made any difference in
your life, . . .

Agree with each other,
love each other,
be deep-spirited friends.

Don't push your way to the front;
don't sweet-talk
your way to the top.

Put yourself aside,
and help others get ahead.

Don't be obsessed with getting
your own advantage.

Forget yourselves long enough to
lend a helping hand.

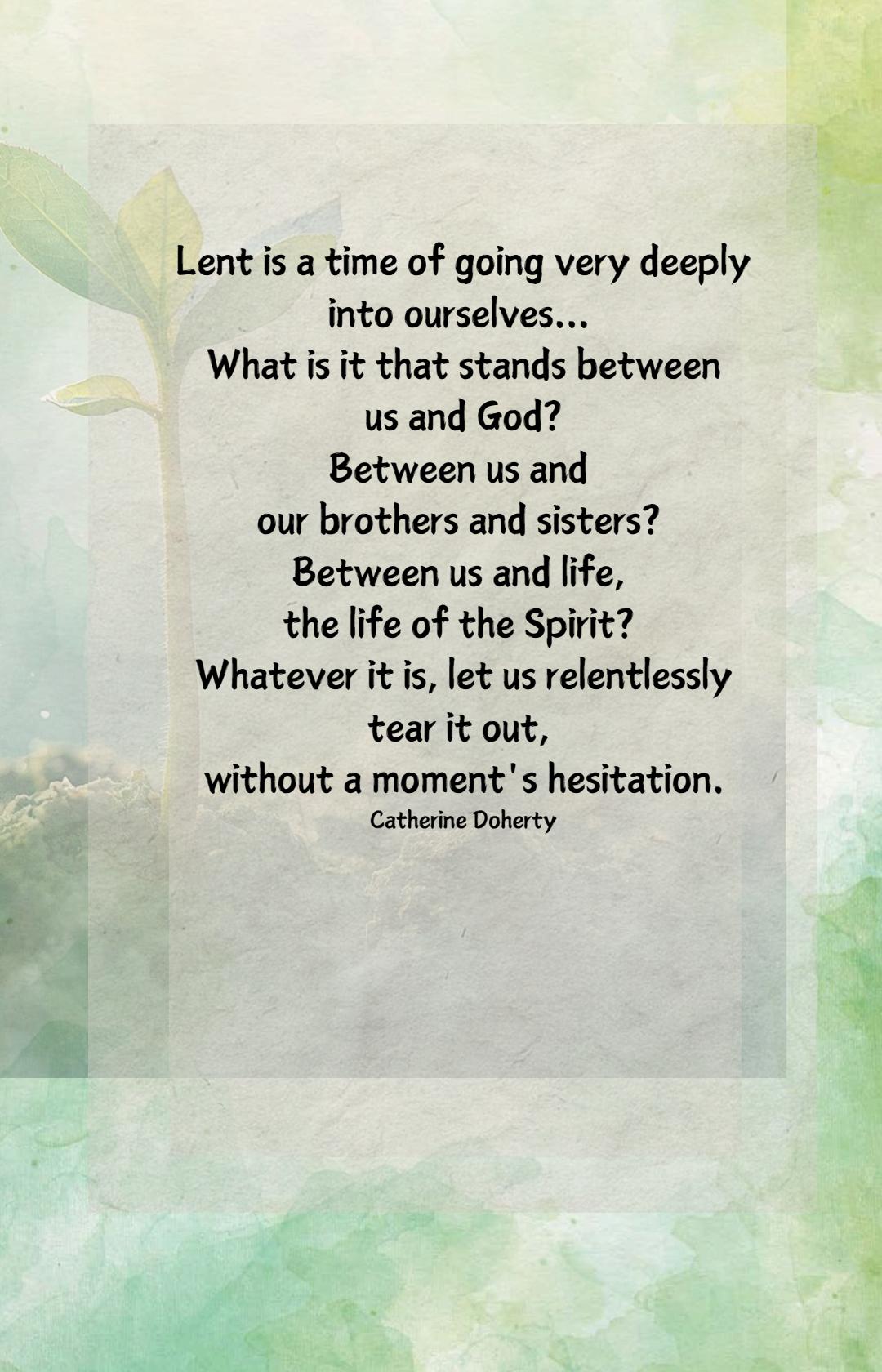
Philippians 2:1-4 (MSG)

Lent has not been a time of punishment, but a time to live into what we are called to be as God's special possession.

Lent has given us the opportunity to consider what in our lives keeps us from doing that, to learn, and prayerfully change.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Lent is a time of going very deeply
into ourselves...

What is it that stands between
us and God?

Between us and
our brothers and sisters?

Between us and life,
the life of the Spirit?

Whatever it is, let us relentlessly
tear it out,
without a moment's hesitation.

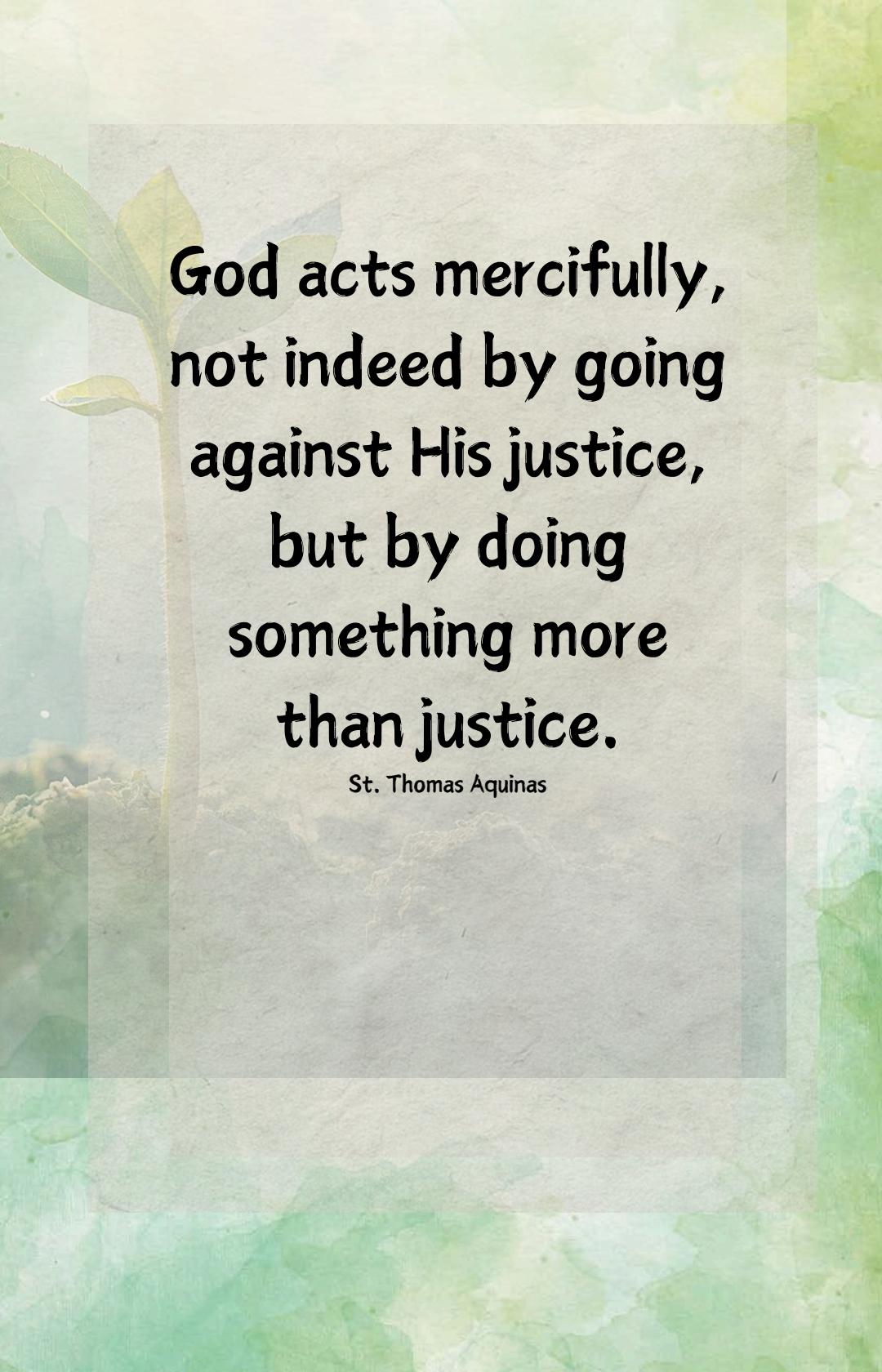
Catherine Doherty

DAY 24

What are those things for you?
You've been journaling, praying,
and meditating for over three weeks of Lent now.
Pray for wisdom to see what barriers mentioned in
the above quote are in your life
and how to remove them.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





God acts mercifully,
not indeed by going
against His justice,
but by doing
something more
than justice.

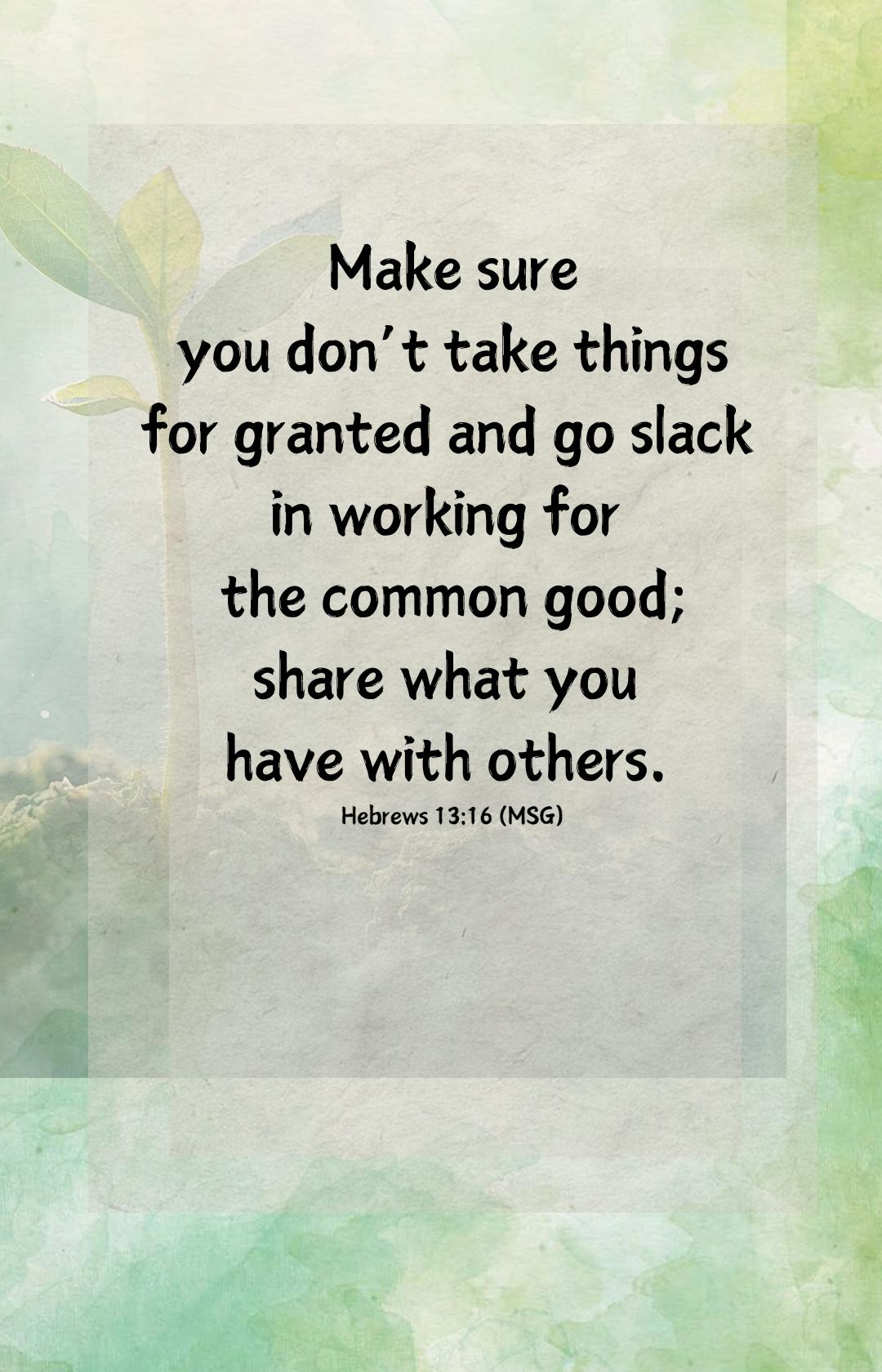
St. Thomas Aquinas

DAY 25

Grace is God's substitute for justice.
His unmerited favor to us. As the song says,
"Amazing love, how can it be, that thou my God
would die for me."
Today, simply be thankful for what you don't
deserve but that God delights to give.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Make sure
you don't take things
for granted and go slack
in working for
the common good;
share what you
have with others.

Hebrews 13:16 (MSG)

What is the "common good?"

What does it mean to you? To your community?

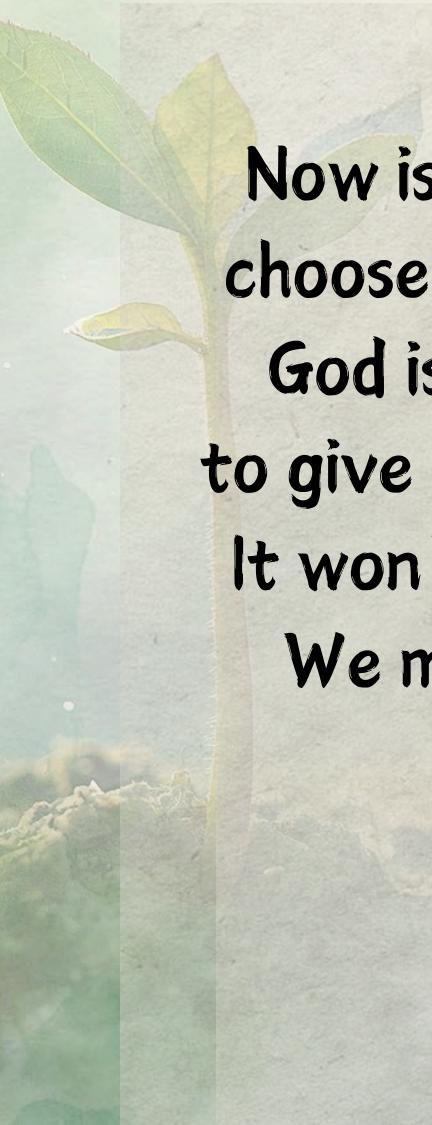
What can you share with others?

Money aside, share your love, prayers, encouragement, hope in Jesus.

People need these gifts.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Now is our chance to
choose the right side.
God is holding back
to give us that chance.
It won't last forever.
We must take it or
leave it.

C. S. LEWIS

DAY 27

Our world is at war with the powers of darkness and
we can't choose to sit on the sidelines.
To do nothing means to choose darkness.
To choose the right side, God's side, takes
continual, purposeful action.
Be brave and choose to do right.

Your response, thoughts, prayers



Faith in the Lord Jesus
Christ is the foundation upon
which sincere and
meaningful repentance
must be built.
If we truly seek to put
away sin, we must
first look to Him
who is the
Author of our salvation.

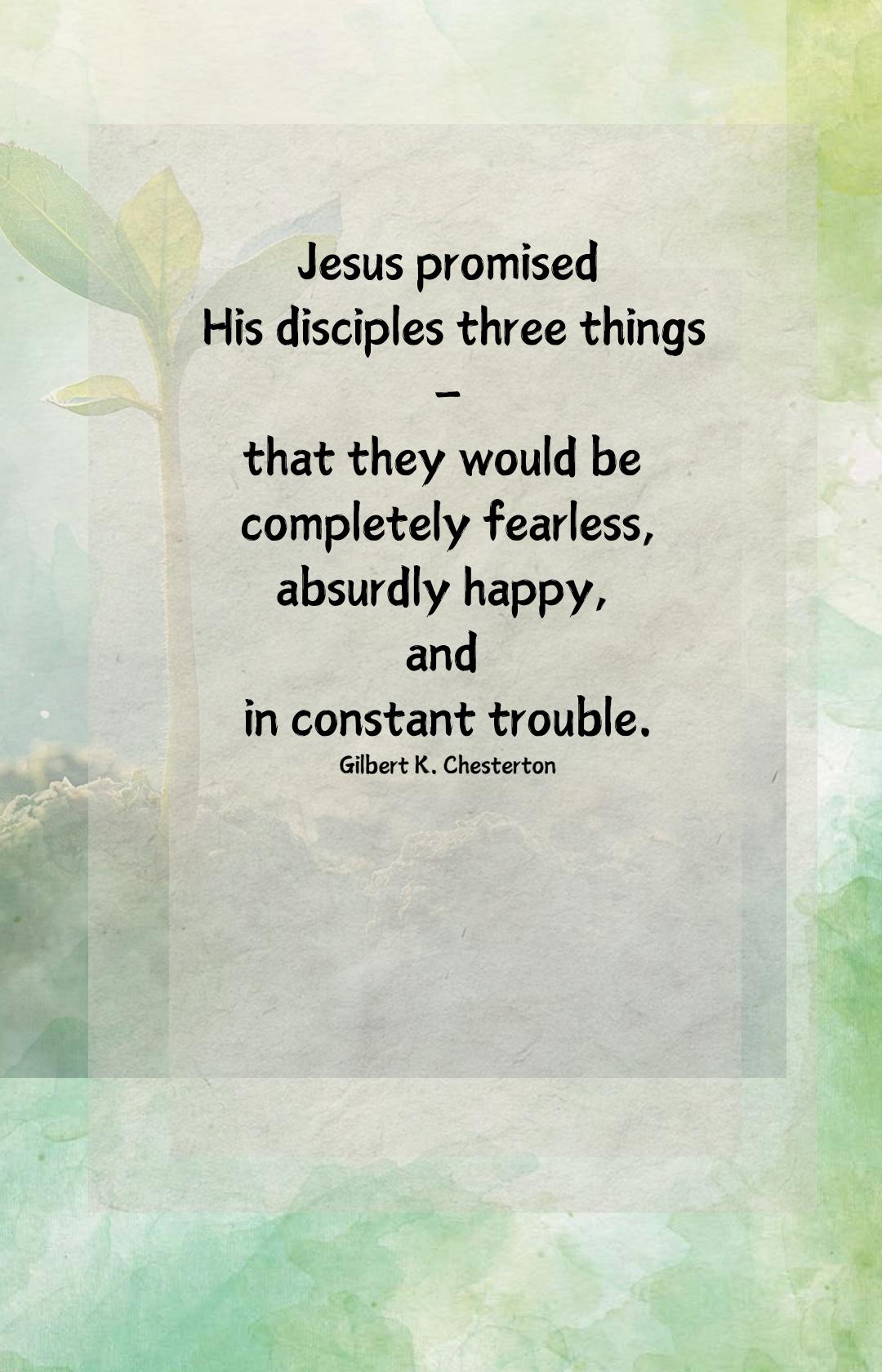
Ezra Taft Benson

DAY 29

These verses seem impossible to fully obey.
But what goals to strive for!
Today, we may not feel worthy,
but if we intentionally are a bit more humble,
a little more gentle, patient a few more minutes,
these virtues will grow.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Jesus promised
His disciples three things

—

that they would be
completely fearless,
absurdly happy,
and
in constant trouble.

Gilbert K. Chesterton

Bravery in the midst of challenges - John 16:33 TLB
puts it this way,

"I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind.

Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world."

Your response, thoughts, prayers



If we do not die to
ourselves,
we cannot live
to God,
and he that does not
live to God,
is dead.

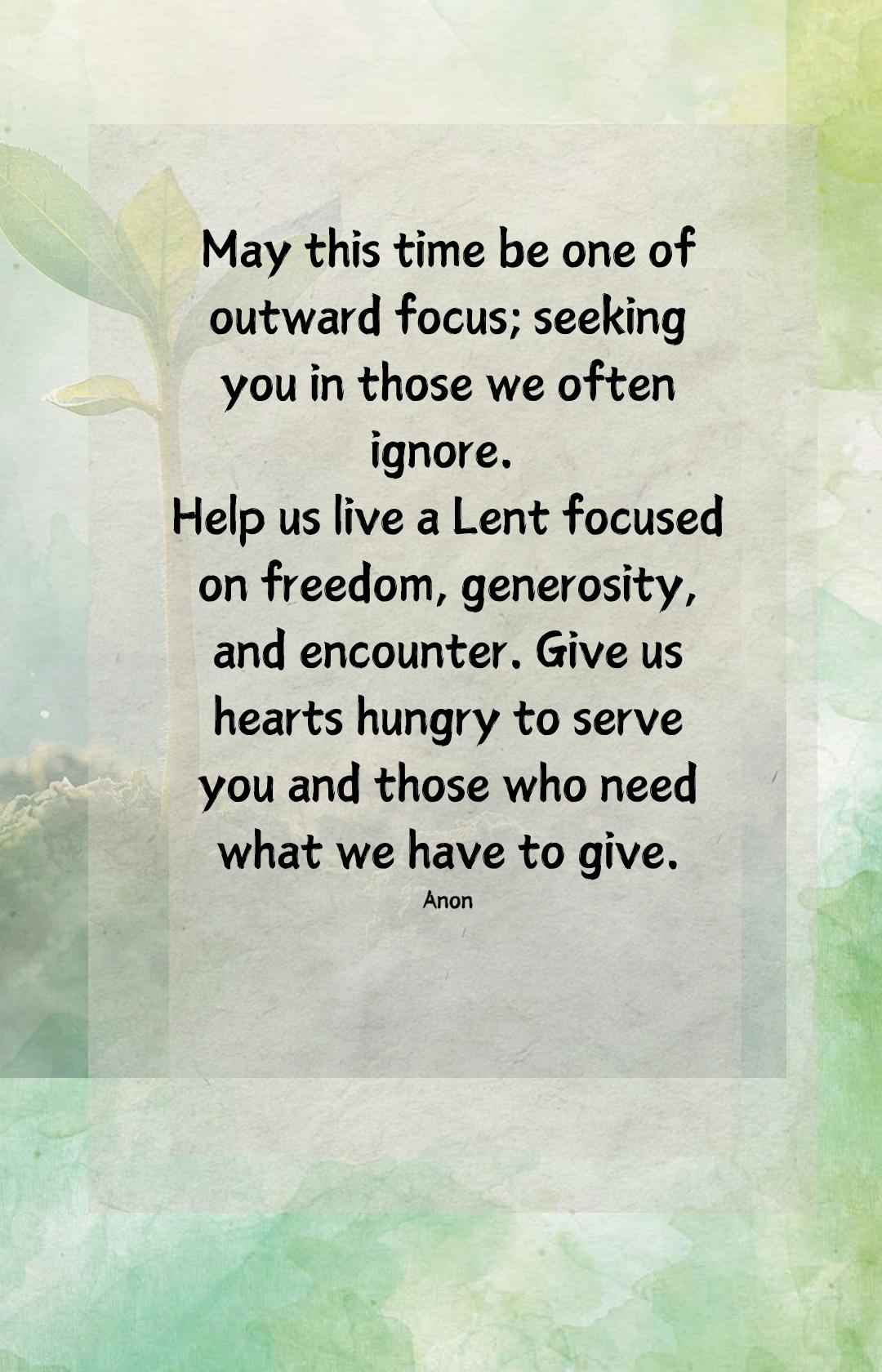
George MacDonald

DAY 31

And yet the wonder of wonders
is that when we feel we have died
and given all to God, He turns everything
around and we realize that this is what we were
created for, this is what will give us true joy and
satisfaction in life and forever.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





May this time be one of
outward focus; seeking
you in those we often
ignore.

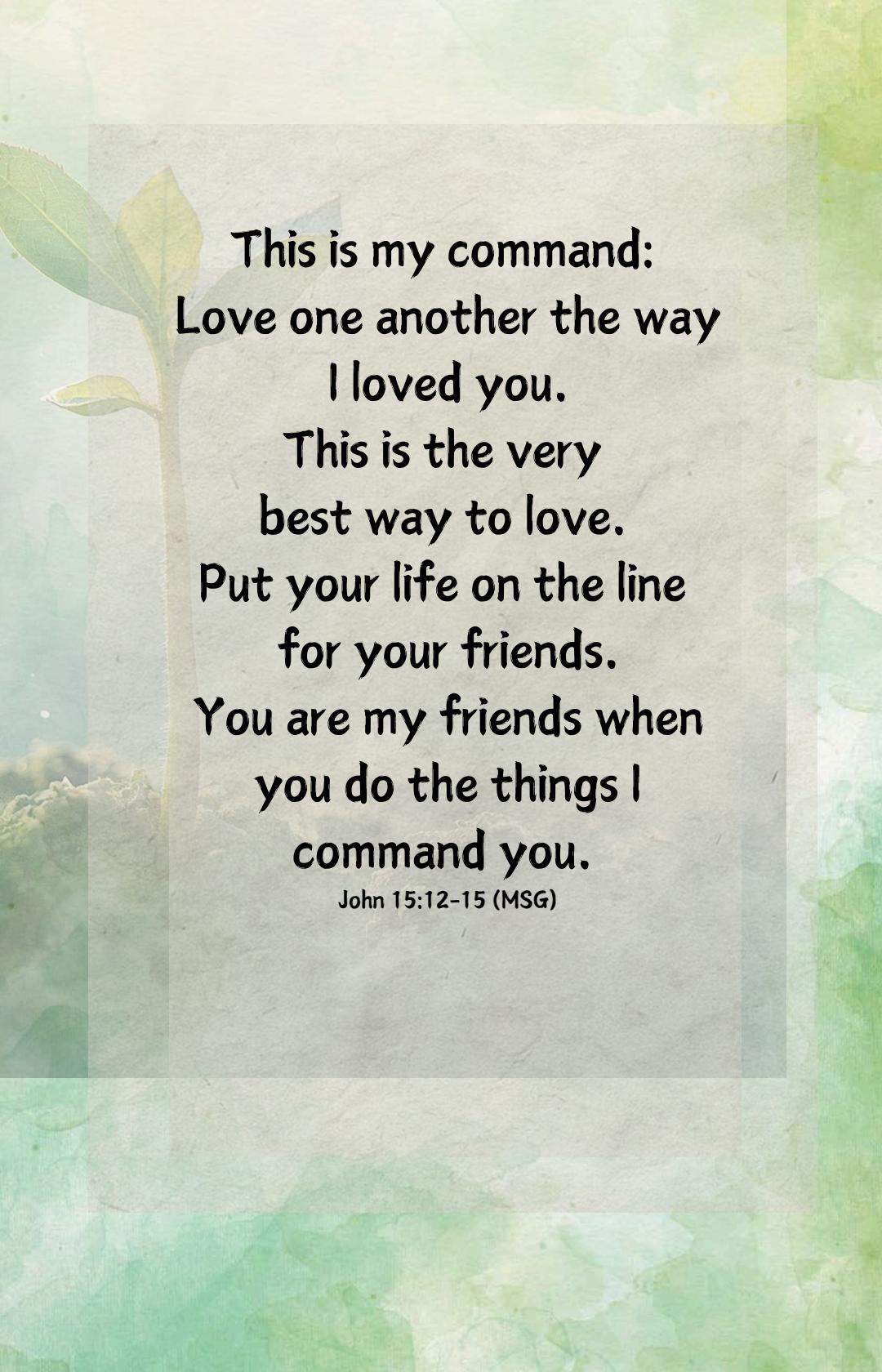
Help us live a Lent focused
on freedom, generosity,
and encounter. Give us
hearts hungry to serve
you and those who need
what we have to give.

Anon

It is tiresome to always be thinking about yourself. It is ultimately not fulfilling. Outward focus, generosity, and an ever deeper encounter with God and others, if during Lent we try a focus on those things, we will find real fulfillment.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





This is my command:
Love one another the way
I loved you.
This is the very
best way to love.
Put your life on the line
for your friends.
You are my friends when
you do the things I
command you.

John 15:12-15 (MSG)

DAY 33

To be a friend of Jesus - it is incredible that is even possible. And to do that is not some out-of-reach, impossible goal. He simply asks we do what He commands. And He gave us a very big book, the Bible, that spells it all out.

Your response, thoughts, prayers



Let the words of my
mouth and the
meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your
sight, O Lord, my
strength and my
redeemer.

Psalm 119:14, KJV

DAY 34

What is in our hearts is what comes out of our mouths. During this time, let's focus on cleaning up the unspoken thoughts in us and what comes out of our mouths will be much more acceptable to our Lord.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





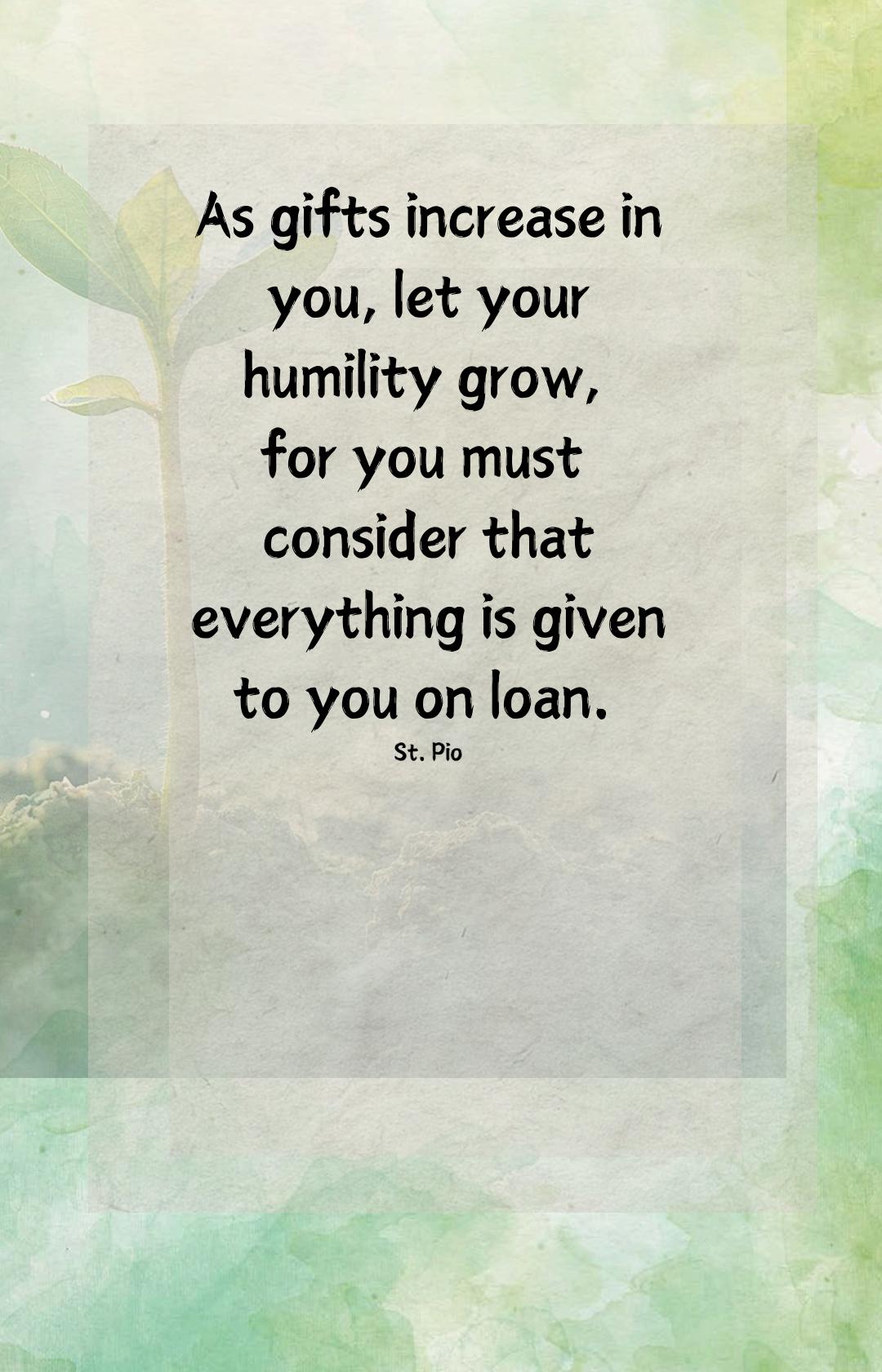
We can think of Lent
as a time to
eradicate evil or
cultivate virtue,
a time to pull up weeds
or plant good seeds.
Which is better is clear,
for the Christian ideal
is always
positive rather than
negative.

Fulton J. Sheen

Jesus said he did not come into the world to condemn it, but to save it.
In all our Lenten meditations may we have a positive, joyful attitude to make the changes that reflect salvation and not condemnation.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





As gifts increase in
you, let your
humility grow,
for you must
consider that
everything is given
to you on loan.

St. Pio

Spiritual gifts are always given to us to share with others, not as an award to be flaunted. That God would trust us with the opportunity to serve is a great privilege and an immense responsibility.

How will you act, knowing that?

Your response, thoughts, prayers





I think that if God
forgives us we must
forgive ourselves.

Otherwise, it is
almost like setting
up ourselves as a
higher tribunal
than Him.

C. S. LEWIS

A danger in Lent is that in the pursuit of cleaning up our hearts and lives, we can begin to wallow in our sins.

We then focus more on our misery than on God's forgiveness. If we do that, our focus is in the wrong place. Forgive yourself and rejoice!

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Strive to attain to the
greater virtues,
but do not neglect
the lesser ones.

Do not make light of a
fall, even if it be the most
venial of faults; rather,
be quick to repair it by
repentance, although many
others may commit a large
number of faults, slight and
grievous, and remain
unrepentant.

Saint Basil

It is in practicing the little, less-noticed virtues
that true godliness grows.

That's where we learn to play to an audience of one – our Lord Jesus. His knowledge of what we do and His approval are what are by far the most important.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





"Even now," declares the LORD,
"return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning."
Rend your heart and not your garments.
Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

Joel 2:12-13

As Lent draws to a close, most likely there have been victories but also a sense of how far you have to go on your pilgrimage to please God. Remember He is always there waiting for you to take the next steps in holiness.

Your response, thoughts, prayers





Unless there is
Good Friday
in your life,
there can be no
Easter Sunday.

Fulton J. Sheen

If you have taken it seriously, Lent has hopefully been one long Good Friday of self-examination, discipline, and spiritual growth. Now is time to look back and record the progress you have made and rejoice that Easter is coming!

Your response, thoughts, prayers



In dying we are
reborn to
eternal life.



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