



**March 4, 2018 – Lent 3 (B)
The Presiding Bishop’s Lent 3 Devotional**

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Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael Curry joined the leaders of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in preparing Lenten Devotions for the season. The full set of devotions, “Set Free by Truth,” can be found and printed at bit.ly/lentendevotional.

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“But we proclaim Christ crucified”

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Some things just don’t make much sense. Water doesn’t become wine, bread and fish do not suddenly multiply, the lame do not jump up and walk. And most certainly, dead people stay dead, especially those who experience the horrific death of crucifixion!

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And yet, where Jesus is involved, all kinds of things that don’t make much sense...happen.



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In those earliest years of the Jesus Movement, his followers didn't wear crosses around their necks or hang them in the homes in which they worshipped. They had other symbols, certainly, but not crosses. Crucifixion was not a historical curiosity, but a still-present reality, and an agonizing and shameful one at that. To be crucified was to be executed as a common criminal. Worse, according to the Hebrew Scriptures, cursed was one who hung on a tree, on the wood of a cross.

So to speak of "Christ crucified" didn't make sense to many. It was a stumbling block, something foolish or offensive. But Paul said otherwise. Yes, Jesus could have avoided the cross, found some other way around it. But instead he faced the worst the world could throw at him, and then broke through death itself, and left an empty cross behind as witness to his astonishing victory.

Some things don't make much sense. The cross is one of them. But it stands now and forever as our rallying cry that God—not injustice, not suffering, not even death—has the final, victorious word.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry
The Episcopal Church

Prayer

"Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace."

Prayer for Mission, The Book of Common Prayer 1979

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