

Lent devotions

READ:

Mark 1:1-10 ([click to open link](#))

REFLECT:

I used to play a game with my son when he was younger. He would chase me in a circle throughout the house. The route was always the same: Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen. Usually, at some point, I would stop, turn around, throw my hands up in the air and roar. My son's response was to repent.

He repented? You see, to repent means to turn away from sin and make amends. When I challenged him, my son would see that the direction he was going was no longer "safe." The big monster was blocking the path. And so, to avoid the monster, he would turn around and run the other way, usually this was back to the safety of his mother to avoid being tickled.

John the Baptist was a cousin of Jesus. He preached the sermon of Isaiah, calling people to confess their sins, turn from sin, and make way for Jesus in their lives. As they did, he would baptize them as a sign of their repentance.

And when he did come, Jesus began his ministry by saying, "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Today is Ash Wednesday, it marks the beginning of the season of Lent a time of reflection, repentance, and renewal. We mark our own repentance with the sign of the cross on our forehead made from the burnt ashes of last year's palm branches. By wearing the ashes, we demonstrate a public and outward expression of our spiritual and inward commitment towards repentance and holy living.

RESPOND:

Take some time tonight to journal or post to social media your thoughts and feelings on repentance. Consider: As you experienced the ashes and call to repentance tonight: How did you reflect on what it means for you to repent; to turn back towards the safety, towards the renewing presence of Christ in your life; and to seek a new path trusting and believing in God's good news?

Maybe even take a selfie of the cross on your forehead and share it on social media.