

Lent devotions

READ:

Mark 14:66-72 ([click to open link](#))

REFLECT:

Peter was no wuss. In fact, he was one of the more strong-willed of the disciples: think, cutting off the guard who came for Jesus's ear, trying to refuse Jesus washing his feet, etc. No, the rock (his name's meaning) would be what and who the church would be built upon. But in this instance he would crumble. He would do what he said he would never do.

It all started harmlessly enough. A statement from an innocuous source in the courtyard, one that most likely wouldn't have hurt him if he had told the truth, makes him flee. Why didn't he own up to who he was? This was a servant. Perhaps he wasn't sure if she was unfailingly loyal to the high priest. Maybe he thought she could make real trouble for him, maybe put him in mortal danger. Or could it have been he was so fearful of the consequences that even this strongest of the twelve was brought down by a person who would not have been held in high regard? As it so often goes, it doesn't end there.

Peter tries to get away but then as today, true identity won't be shaken. It follows him to the entryway and spreads suspicions to others. Whether Peter realized it or not, it was already too late. He had no option but to stick with the lie. Funny how one denial of a friend or a value or our faith snowballs into something unforeseen, something unintended. Saving our own skin becomes not just something we do but something that's everything and we find ourselves denying globally, to anyone nearby. Our dirty little secret or the thing we thought was no big deal now becomes the deal. A deal that's a bitter pill bringing heartache and hurt to our depths. Something we find nearly impossible to swallow. Something carrying with it the ache of guilt. The good news is we, just like Peter, can experience forgiveness and resurrection of our spirit.

Despite our denials we are given the gift of rebirth. Despite the lies, despite the deception and despite the public distancing, whatever the issue, we are given a clean slate. We can be reunited with our true selves and not just reaffirmed, we can achieve great things. Our Father knows us, often better than we know ourselves. He sees potential we do not. He sees good works we cannot fathom. He knows our human failings are not final. All we need do is open ourselves to Him, accept our forgiveness and live fully into the life He has for us.

RESPOND:

Have you ever been falsely accused of something? Has anyone ever trumped up the charges against you just to make you look worse? How can enduring through the gossip, the false accusations, the threats, and hardness, help make you stronger in the long run?