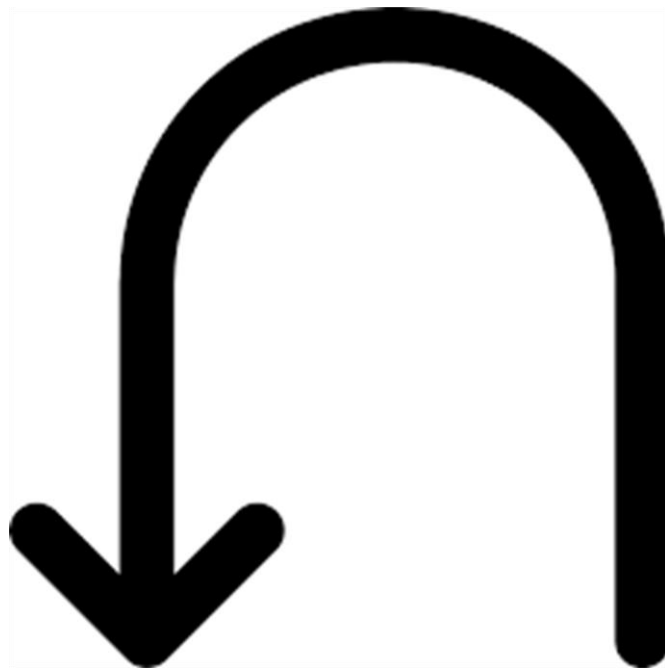


“Return to the Lord your God”

When the people of Israel were about to enter the promise land after wondering in the wilderness for forty years Moses said to them,

“When all these things have happened to you, the blessings and the curses that I have set before you, if you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and return to the Lord your God, and you and your children obey him with all your heart and with all your soul, just as I am commanding you today, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, gathering you again from all the peoples among whom the Lord your God has scattered you. Deuteronomy 30:1-3

And when the people of Israel rebelled against Moses, he these words, ‘The Lord is slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the parents upon the children to the third and the fourth generation.’ Numbers 14:18



Do you recognize the underlined words? They are part of our Gospel Acclamation sung during Lent right before we read the gospel text.

One of the main points of Lent is repentance. To repent means to turn around, or to return to the Lord

when we have turned away from God. In other words, if we are walking away from God, or anyone, repent means to turn around and face the possibilities of new life. Repent means to find a way let go of or overcome whatever separates us from one another. Lent is a time to return to God, admit our faults and start over. It is also a time to do the same with those we are afraid to talk to.

Lent is a great time of year. It is a time of renewal of broken relationships. It is a time of hope and new life. “Return to the Lord your God for God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.” Or, in the words of an old hymn,

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling
for you and for me...

You who are weary come home.
Jesus is calling, “O sinner come home.”