

## E-DEVOTION FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 25

I love the term we hear at Desert Hills often... "Laughter Liberates!" It is liberating to laugh, isn't it? In Genesis 21, we read the story of the birth of a boy to Abraham and Sarah. They were old folks. So it was quite a surprise to them when Isaac was to be born. The Bible tells us, Sarah said *"God has brought me joy and laughter. Everyone who hears about it will laugh with me."*

I like that she tells us that folks will laugh 'with' her and not 'at' her. It's never a very good thing when we get laughed at! Last week, I had an interesting experience. As I was about to enter the church in the morning, I had way too much in my hands and I felt myself take a misstep. Of course, down I went! No injuries, but the first thing I did was to look around and make sure no one saw me. No luck there! Not in this place. Of course my stumble was noticed! But we all just laughed. Not 'at' me... but 'with' me.

Sometimes we just must do a better job at laughing at ourselves. Or maybe just a better job at laughing. It is liberating. During Lent, things get a bit somber. We are walking to the cross, of course. It was a hard time for Jesus and his friends. Hard times can really get you down. Laughter and tears are frequently so connected. I remember when my mother-in-law died, and my wife and her sisters were telling funny stories about their mom. Even though we all were in a rather dark place, we found ourselves laughing and laughing... through the tears.

We know that joy comes in the morning. There are smiles and laughter after tears. It's the last few steps now and we can feel consumed with our sadness. We will meet our Lord this Sunday with palms and hallelujahs. Then we will suffer through those last days. But Easter will come! After tears... songs of joy.

Keep on washing your hands. Fold them, bow your head, and pray for sunshine after rain. Laughter following tears. And please get your vaccinations. It's the wise thing to do. I really believe that.

Pray with me: "Dear Lord, you brought joy and laughter to Abraham and Sarah. Keep us focused on what lies ahead as we welcome Him with palms and cheers... and then tears. Give us strength for what lies ahead. Amen. In Jesus' name, Amen."