

- The word for *spirit* in Hebrew and Aramaic is *ruach*; in Greek it is *pneuma*. In all three languages, the word means “wind” and “breath” and “spirit.” Spend some time concentrating on your breathing this week. Can you pause at least once a day and imagine that you are breathing in the Spirit with every breath? How does that idea change your image of yourself? Of God’s presence?
- Choose one of the colors from *Spark* to notice this week – in plants and flowers, in a display in a shop window you pass, in a pair of socks, a bowl, a crayon or pencil, in a bird that sings outside your window. What might the colored splendor of this painting be inviting you to explore about Lent or about your own journey?
- Think of a time when you felt particularly close to God at night, or at a time of inner darkness. What are your most powerful memories of that time?

Lent 2: Wind

John 3:1-17

Additional passages: **Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

Whoever is on a journey towards God goes from one beginning to another beginning. Will you be among those who dare to tell themselves: “Begin again! Leave discouragement behind! Let your soul live!

– Brother Roger of Taizé

Gather & Center

Prepare the worship table with a purple tablecloth. Set a candle inside the shallow bowl and bring a small, quiet fan to blow gently during the session. When everyone is gathered, light the candle and start the Lent 2 segment of the video, joining in the following prayer. Pause the video as directed or whenever you wish to take time for discussion.

God of dark and light,
 in the darkness of my mother’s body,
 I was formed to live in light.
 From light and labor, you call me to rest in sweet darkness.
 Open my heart to the fertile creativity of the dark:
 the darkness of the deep earth,
 the darkness of dreams,
 the darkness of the tomb
 that will birth me into eternal light.
 Amen.

Enter & Engage

Before restarting the video, read aloud John 3:1-17. Pause the video for discussion as you wish.

Ask Yourself

Use these questions and suggestions to invite discussion, prayer, and reflection.

1. What feelings and thoughts does the word *night* conjure up for you? How about *darkness*? How do you think your feelings and thoughts affect your understanding of what this passage means?
2. Read the very beginning of the focus text (John 3:1-2a). Nicodemus goes to Jesus at night to ask his questions. What wisdom has come to you during conversations late at night, or in the dark?
3. If you had the opportunity that Nicodemus had to spend some time alone with Jesus asking any question you wanted, what would you ask?
4. Bring your focus to John 3:12. What “earthly things” does Jesus teach in this story that you believe most easily? What things do you find it hard to believe? Why? Are there things you don’t want to believe? Why?

5. Read the story in Numbers 21:4-9 and then read John 3:14. What questions arise for you when you read the two passages side by side? What do you suppose Jesus was trying to say about himself when he used this image from Hebrew scripture?

Ponder & Pray

Gather near the worship table. Take four or five deep breaths, paying attention to the feel of the air moving in and out. Share one word that captures your response to this session. Spend a moment in silence as you take leave of the image *Spark*. When you are ready, read the following together, or you may wish to speak the lines as a litany:

One: Breath of God, exhale me into light.

Two: Spirit of God, inhale me into darkness.

Three: Breath of God, whisper me into dreams.

Four: Spirit of God, shout me into visions.

Five: Breath of God, sing me into hope.

All: Spirit of God, blow us into discovery.

Another Step

As the week unfolds, take some intentional time to engage again with the scripture passages for the Second Sunday in Lent (see p. 1). Open a window or set a small fan near your sacred space. Spend a few moments each day with *Spark* and consider how it affirms or changes your thoughts and feelings about Lent.