

## Reflection: Thursday after Ash Wednesday 2024

Deuteronomy is very blunt “choose life or choose death”. Like the Hebrews, we would choose life and choose God. Lent is an opportunity to work on that choice. However, the Gospel tells us that Jesus chose death, death on a cross. Only, in his case, choosing death won life for us all.

This makes Lent a season to give heartfelt thanks to God for winning life for us but as our Assumptions Rule of Life suggests, every day is a call to conversion, a call to choose Christ.

We make choices all the time in what we say, what we think about, and the actions we take. We do not live our lives by accident; we choose how we will conduct ourselves. If we want to follow Jesus, then we must make intentional and consistent choices to do so. We have no excuse for not following through on our commitments. Whether or not we choose to follow Jesus will be based solely on the choices we make. The first choice of every day involves choosing to renew your commitment to Jesus and following him. We are responsible for our choices every minute of every hour of every day. Let us choose wisely; let us choose Christ; let us choose life!

**Had I my way to choose**, how easy I would make it:

how free from chilling blast, how sheltered and secure.

No piercing sorrow should invade the precincts of my life,

no disappointment fall across my eager spirit:

but I would know the sweets of rest,

the joy of comfort undisturbed by any outer power.

Choose then thy way, O soul, but know the way thou choosest.

For thee no mountain heights,

no rapturous delights in daylight breaking;

no sense of victory gained, or evil driven.

No, not for thee the strength that comes in conflict sore;

the joy of grand achievement, the gain that follows every loss,

and most of all the glory of the Cross – these, these are not for thee.

Oh, better far, to let Him choose thy way

who never chose His own; to let Him lead thee

through the valley drear, and up the mountain steep;

through light and dark, through sun and snow, to where

eternal love makes all things plain, and show us

how severest loss was lasting gain.

Oh, better far, to let him choose thy way: what wilt thou say?

Choose Thou my way, O Lord, I dare not choose my own;

the things I crave for most –

a spirit pure, a heart at ease, a life from sin set free;

these Thou alone canst give: all else is but a passing thought.

Oh, may I not resent Thy chastening hand,

but learn to understand that only Thou canst order me aright. (Anon)