



COMING HOME

By Joan Carey, Executive Director of Firstfruits Faith Center | Photo by Patricia Photography



I remember how excited my parents got when I would come home from college to visit. I still have pangs of guilt when I think about it all these years later because those visits for me weren't so much about spending time with my family as it was spending time with my boyfriend, my friends, shopping and sleeping.

One of my visits, in particular has stayed with me because of an unusual

request from my mother. I was running around getting ready to go out that night. I was removing the pink foam curlers from my hair and deciding which Levi corduroy bell bottoms to wear when my mom came in my room and said, "Joannie,

sit down, I just want to look at you." That bothered me. I didn't have time to just sit with her. What was she thinking? But I did it.

It wasn't until years later when my own children were college age that I truly understood what was behind my mother's somewhat odd request. A deep longing to just gaze upon and be with someone you love so deeply. When children are grown and out of the nest, a parent's life is full of imagining what their kids are doing, what is happening to them and how they are coping. There isn't the everyday reassurance they are safe, happy and healthy like when they are under your wing. The world has so many traps. To have them physically in your presence brings much needed relief from the worry and gives your heart someplace to unload all the stored up love.

That longing of a mother for her child is a fraction of the longing God has for you and me, His children. God is longing for you to come home to Him. To be safe from the world's traps in His presence and let Him unload all the love He has for you. To find new life with Him.

There is a song we often hear during Lent called *Hosea*. It's one of my favorites. The repeating refrain goes like this:

"LONG HAVE I WAITED
FOR YOUR COMING HOME TO ME
AND LIVING
DEEPLY IN OUR NEW LIFE."

This Lent, come home. Give up all that keeps you away. Fast from the things that come between you and time for God.

God is asking you to sit down and let Him just look at you this Lent. Don't ignore this unusual request. Pull up a chair!

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