

The Courtyard Fire  
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for Concordia University Chicago Lenten Devotions

*And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. Mark 14:54*

When reading this biblical text, my first reaction was one of indignation and criticism towards Peter for following Jesus at a distance and staying in the courtyard warming himself around the fire. But after examining my conscience and heart, I realized how much I resemble Peter. How many times have I had the same attitude? How many times have I come in contact with His Word? How many times have I seen His miracles? How many times has He comforted me with His forgiveness and His love? And how many times, like Peter, have I followed Him at a distance? Especially when I don't give my time and have not dedicated my life to the one who suffers for me; when I remain silent in the face of injustice; when I criticize my neighbor; when I am intolerant and my patience is quickly exhausted; when I reject someone who is not like me; when I believe that my opinion is always the best; when I justify my actions to calm my conscience. But it comforts me to know that Jesus, on His way to the cross, thought of me, that He gave Himself for me, to remove the weight of the guilt of sin and offered me His love so that now together, I and others can live our journey of dedication and service here on earth.

*Heavenly Father, thank you for your forgiveness and your love manifest in Christ. Help us to live united to you in thought, word and deed. We ask this in your Son Jesus' name. Amen.*