



## **First Sunday of Lent** **February 18, 2018**

*Selected readings: Genesis 9:8-15, Mark 1:12-15*

The 2002 film *About A Boy* follows the protagonist Will as he lives a fabulous bachelor life in London, surviving off the royalties of a hit Christmas carol written by his father. Will has it all: he drives an Audi, is happily unemployed (and thus does whatever he wants, whenever he wants), and has a gadget-filled flat. The film opens with John Donne's quote "No man is an island," and Will spends the film trying to refute that... ultimately to no avail.

Today's readings give us a glimpse of the contrast of the darkness of isolation versus the happiness of relationships and, specifically, the saving joy of being in relationship with God. God makes a covenant with Noah; Jesus suffers death, but on our behalf; and Jesus leaves the isolation of the desert to proclaim fulfillment and the coming of the Kingdom.

I have no doubt that the happiest moments of my life have been moments filled with shared laughter, conversation, and often communal celebration of faith. Yet, living a busy life at home and at work means self-doubt, sadness, and pity can easily creep into my life, if I'm not careful.

I'm aiming to make Lent a time of giving thanks for the worldly relationships I have in my life, and for refining my relationship with God through prayer and sacrifice. I'm not an island, and for that I am grateful.

-Mr. John Penilla, Director of Annual Giving