

## Introduction To This Guide

These daily devotional guides are provided to encourage you to listen and reflect on how God is speaking to you during this Season of Lent. The question at the end of each day's contemplation is intended to foster further reflection and prayer throughout the day. In addition, space is provided for you to document your thoughts on how you hear God speaking to you at this time. May you be blessed and transformed through the Holy Spirit as you ponder God's word during this most holy of seasons. ++ *Provided by:* Community Missions Inc., 1570 Buffalo Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14303, Phone: (716) 285-3403, [www.communitymissions.org](http://www.communitymissions.org)

### *Where Do I Begin?*

Begin each day with the Prayer of Illumination to help, prepare your heart to hear God's word for you. Read "to be formed and transformed rather than to gather information...Read with a vulnerable heart. Expect to be blessed...Read as one awake, one waiting for the beloved. Read with reverence."\*

Let us Pray a *Prayer of Illumination*:

All-Seeing One, above me, around me, within me —

**guide my vision as I engage with your sacred words.**

Look down upon me, look out from within me, look all around me.

**See through my eyes, hear through my ears, feel through my heart.**

God of Wisdom, touch me where I need to be touched;

and when my heart is touched, give me the grace to lay

down this Holy Book and ask significant questions:

**Why has my heart been touched by you?**

**How am I to be changed through your touch?**

All-Seeing One, I need to change, I need to look a little more like You.

**May these sacred words change and transform me.**

Then I can meet You face to face...when I shall be healed forever.

Your Word and the touch of your Spirit bring healing...

a healing that will last.

**O Eye of God, look not away.**

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,**

**and put a new and right spirit within me. Amen.**

Adapted from *A Tree Full of Angels* by Macrina Wiederkehr [As quoted in *A Guide To Prayer For All God's People*, Job & Shawchuck, The Upper Room]

## SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY – Day 4 *FASTING FROM MALICIOUS SPEECH*

Isaiah 58:9b-12

If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness,  
and your gloom be like the noonday.  
The LORD will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.  
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many  
generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

### *LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS*

Faith is a journey in which *the Lord will guide you continually*. To rely on God in a world that focuses on success and results and self fulfillment is to go *against* the mainstream of society. We read the headlines, and listen to the news, and we say, "O isn't it awful the way *those people* act, isn't it terrible that those kids are so violent, isn't it a shame that so many kids are hungry." Or we justify not giving money to beggars on the street because "they'll just use it for alcohol or drugs." Meanwhile *some people* cook up special meals for their \$1500 dogs, and lament that because of the pandemic they can't take their usual winter holiday, and others have not checked on their elderly neighbor whom they have not seen for days.

Lent is a time to ponder our priorities. As Paul said in his letter to the Corinthian churches: *I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance.* (2 Cor. 8:13-14)

And so let our *light rise in the darkness*, however God guides us; perhaps it is to *satisfy the needs of the afflicted*, or it may be to repair a broken relationship, or restore something that has been lost. Lent is a time to assess the present in order to change the future.

*PRAYER*

Open my eyes, Lord, and help me see how to serve you better. Reveal to me how I am complicit in the events that I find most horrendous. Give me the courage and strength to be involved in ways that make real and lasting change. Keep me from *pointing the finger and speaking evil*. Help me, Lord, to be part of the solution, not just a spectator to the problem. Help me to illumine your light and your love in the world. Amen

*FOR FURTHER REFLECTION*

Where are my own *parched places* that I need God to satisfy?

---

---

---

---

---

Visit [www.HopeForNiagara.org](http://www.HopeForNiagara.org) for more spiritual resources.

## Lent 2022 – Day 4

### A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



*The Temptation In The Wilderness* Briton Rivière (1840–1920)

#### SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY FASTING FROM MALICIOUS SPEECH



This week’s devotional resource was written by Rev. Wendy Depew Partelow, President of the American Baptist Churches of New York State Board of Missions, and edited by Rev. Mark H. Breese of Community Missions. The content was created specifically keeping in mind the populations served by Community Missions.

#### REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Scripture Verses are from the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV), HarpurCollins Publishers, 1989.

\*The choice of Daily Scripture texts and reflection questions are taken from *Lent & Easter, Wisdom from Thomas Merton*, Linguori Publications.

*ff* Frank G. Honeycutt, “How Jesus Hangs On”, *Marry a Pregnant Virgin: Unusual Stories for New and Curious Christians*, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2008, p. 100-104.

*ff* Carlo Carretto, *Why Me Lord*, as quoted in *A Guide to Prayer for All God’s People*, Job & Shawchuck, The Upper Room, p. 117.

-----fold here  
↓ front cover ↓  
-----fold here