

## 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]

## FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT – Day 5

### *THE IMITATION OF CHRIST*

Luke 4:1-4

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

### *HOW DOES JESUS DO IT?*

Frank G. Honeycutt<sup>ff</sup>, author of *Marry a Pregnant Virgin*, asks that question as he ponders this foray of Jesus into the wilderness for 40 days where *he ate nothing at all during those days!*

While reflecting on this formative event that happens at the beginning of Jesus ministry, right after his baptism, Honeycutt recalls a childhood memory where at every family event there would be the same stories told so that those stories became the very fabric of *his* story too. He likens that to the church, where every week we gather and share these stories of the Bible: from Noah and Moses to the sons of Jacob, we hear about the law and the prophets, the promises and the prophecies, and we hear these stories about Jesus year after year. And somehow these stories, they sustain us, year after year.

The answer to how Jesus was able to do it, how Jesus was able to not only *resist* the temptations that the devil set before him but to really put the devil in his place, is that Jesus *knew* the law and the prophets! All of his life he had been brought up with the stories of his people; their struggles and their blessings, their slavery and their deliverance, their trials and their tribulations.

These stories that so molded his very being armed Jesus with a faith in God so unshakable that he could even stand before the devil - lips split and gums bleeding from lack of food and water, skin burnt and cracked from exposure to the elements, cheeks sunken into his skull and every bone in his body visible through a thin layer of skin - he could stand before the devil and say with conviction in his heart and mind, "One does not live by bread alone...Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him...Do not put the Lord your God to the test!" (Luke 4:4, 8, 12). And

Jesus returned to the Galilee full of the power of the Holy Spirit! (Luke 4:14)

*PRAYER*

Heavenly Father, prepare me to live in this world through trust in your holy word. Strengthen me to resist temptation. Embolden me to speak your truth when lies are all around me. But most importantly: *Search me, O Lord and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* (Psalm 139:23-24) Amen.

*FOR FURTHER REFLECTION*

How does my relationship with God help me to overcome the temptations of the world?

---

---

---

---

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

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

**Lent 2022 – Day 5**

**A Guide for Devotion and Prayer**



*Because of Your Love I Am Free!, Drawing, Lingnan University, Hong Kong, China*

**FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT  
THE IMITATION OF CHRIST**



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.