

Introduction To This Guide

These daily devotions 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

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."ttt

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]

WEDNESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK - Day 8

UNCOVERING OUR INNER LIGHT

Luke 11:33-36

No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar, but on the lamp stand so that those who enter may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light; but if it is not healthy, your body is full of darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its rays.

TRUTH AND LIGHT

As Christians it often appears that we are straddling two different worlds: the world of light, which Christ Jesus promoted; and the world of darkness, where evil dwells. The problem is in the grey area, where the stumbling blocks are. Most of us know pure evil when we see it, but *good* seems to be more relative. Where is the light of Christ when we must deny ourselves so that others may have a fair measure? Our life in *the world* influences how we see in the light. If the situations we face in life cause us to continually be in the darkness of pain and despair, a bright *flash* may blind us to the true light of Christ, which is always love.

When our own power or way of life is threatened, we may discern the true test of our faith in God. James C. Fenhagen, in his book *Mutual Ministry*,^t says "to become a disciple means to see for oneself the values that energized the life of Jesus of Nazareth. We must struggle with them, until that moment when, by the grace of God, they become our own. We must be committed to building an ongoing and disciplined enrichment of our relationship to God. We must affirm human need and worth in the face of the harmful 'principalities and powers' that control our lives. We need to increase our desire to serve life out of love, not to gain power or reward. We must identification with the poor and the hungry and the oppressed. These are values that we can see in the life of Jesus."

When we consider this, may we always know the difference between a blinding flash, and the enduring light of Christ, which is de-

pendable, consistent, and always true. “The Law...was given through Moses, grace and *truth* came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17)

PRAYER

Almighty God, you who created light to pierce the darkness, penetrate my heart with the warmth of your mercy, illumine my life with the radiance of your compassion, surround me with the light of your presence, and enfold me in your overflowing grace. Be with me, Lord, as I grow in your love and reflect your light for all to see. Amen

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

How does your life reflect the truth and inner light of Christ?

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Lent 2022 – Day 8

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



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

WEDNESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK UNCOVERING OUR INNER LIGHT



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 are taken from *Lent & Easter, Wisdom from Thomas Merton*, Linguori Publications.

¹ James C. Fenhagen, *Mutual Ministry*, as quoted in *A Guide to Prayer for All God’s People*, Job & Shawchuck, The Upper Room, pgs. 89- Quote reworded for easier reading. Ibid. ¹¹ pg.88.

^{1f}Walter Russell Bowie, *The Compassionate Christ*, Abington Press, 1965, pgs. 99-100.

^{1tt}Thomas Merton, *Lent & Easter, Wisdom from Thomas Merton*, Linguori Publications, pg. 28.

Visit www.HopeForNiagara.org for more spiritual resources.