

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]

THURSDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK - Day 9

SEEK GOOD AND YOU SHALL FIND IT

Matthew 7:7-11

Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

HARVESTING THE GOOD

Seeking and serving God "is more than simply doing good...it is something *Christ does* in us, through us, and with us."¹ In this season of Lent, we seek to deepen our relationship with Jesus as the Christ through confession and repentance. But confession and repentance are only part of what makes us whole in Christ.

Jesus says when you search you find. In that process of searching and finding there is an unspoken hope that your *actions will reflect* what you claim to have found. At that point you may ask God what it is that he wants from you. Jesus says you may be assured that when you ask it will be given. You may have to listen with patience, taking into consideration where God has placed you at this point in your life—a point where you are pausing to question God's call upon your life. Listen to the whispers of your heart. Consider your surroundings and what manner of situation has God placed you in his kingdom.

You know that God has great things in store for those who believe; and so dare to ask for your heart's desire! In your wildest dreams, if you could serve God in any way that you would choose, what would it be?

The Apostle Paul encourages us: "rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known

to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:4-7)

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I pray for your glory to be revealed in me. I pray for discernment, dear Lord, that you may show me how I may serve you. Reveal your gifts in me, and help me to use them for your glory—for doing good in the world. Let me hear your call, and with a willing heart let me walk through the open door to serve you in love and faithfulness always. Amen

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

What is a “good gift” that God has given me to be used for God’s glory?

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

Visit www.HopeForNiagara.org for more spiritual resources.

Lent 2022 – Day 9

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



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

THURSDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK SEEK GOOD AND YOU SHALL FIND IT



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.

^t 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. ^{t1} pg.88.

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

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