

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]

MONDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK - Day 13

HUNGRY FOR THE KINGDOM

Luke 6:20-26

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours in the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

BLESSED ARE...

We have been in this Lenten study for almost 2 weeks. Perhaps you are taking the call to repentance seriously and you wonder when you will turn the corner and *feel forgiven*. Or perhaps the appeal to give sacrificially has generated some *push back* from those closest to you: family, friends, colleagues or spouse. If that is the case then be encouraged.

Walter Russell Bowie, in his book *The Compassionate Christ*,^{tt} points out that this sermon given by Jesus in Luke 6 is directed at the disciples. Bowie says "it is as though [Jesus] said, *I know all about it. You are bothered about what you left behind and what you do not have. You get so discouraged you could almost cry. Sometimes you are afraid. A little more and you might pity yourselves. But do you know what the truth is? You are the ones on whom the blessing rests. You're the ones who can be glad. Look up, and look ahead. Yours will be part of the victory of the kingdom of God; and having been poor and hungry and sometimes scared will seem to have been nothing in comparison with the joy of that!*"

But we can see the message is broader even than that. The message is "for all those who could be called poor." Bowie points out that Jesus knew what it was to stand before an unjust judge; and Jesus "saw

the quality of soul that could develop” in those who were treated unfairly. Jesus knew the patience, courage, and faithfulness generated by their struggle.

Furthermore, in Jesus’ scolding of the rich and satisfied, he is encouraging and highlighting his concern “for the poor and the afflicted; for social righteousness, and [Jesus’] indignation against all callousness and cruelty of the strong against the weak.” Jesus is leading his disciples, and us, to the same awareness.

PRAYER

Almighty God, thank you for all the blessings you have bestowed upon me. Give me the strength to endure whatever challenges may come as I continue to follow you. Give me discernment and wisdom as I seek your will. Amen

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Name one thing you struggle with and pray for God’s help?

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Visit www.HopeForNiagara.org for more spiritual resources.

Lent 2022 – Day 13

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



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MONDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK HUNGRY FOR THE KINGDOM



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. ^{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.