

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."*

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.

TUESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT - Day 14

DOING JUSTICE

Isaiah 1:10, 16-17, 21-28

Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before you eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan plead for the widow...

The faithful city ... that was full of justice, righteousness lodged in her -- but now murderers! Your silver has become dross, your wine is mixed with water. Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not defend the orphan, and the widow's cause does not come before them. Therefore says the Sovereign, the LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: Ah, I will pour out my wrath on my enemies, and avenge myself on my foes! I will turn my hand against you; I will smelt away your dross as with lye and remove all your alloy. And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.

Zion shall be redeemed by justice, and those in her who repent, by righteousness. But rebels and sinners shall be destroyed together, and those who forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

THE ILLUSION OF FREEDOM

In the United States it has become a common theme to talk about our rights and freedoms: freedom of speech and the right to bear arms are two that currently come to mind. And so we must look hard at those *freedoms* and be sure not to violate them. But with freedom comes responsibility. As human beings our responsibility may be to live and let live; but as Christians, our responsibility is to love our fellow brothers and sisters.

Thomas Merton, in *Lent and Easter Wisdom*,^{ttt} says, "Our abdication of responsibility is...an abdication of liberty." What I think Merton is talking about is that to *leave it there*, to say, "O that is your right to say whatever you want," or "yes that is your right to point your gun

at me because you feel threatened,” is to sidestep the issue of freedom. As Christians, both our speech and our actions are to reflect the love of Jesus the Christ.

I think the Apostle Paul said it best, “‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things are beneficial. ‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things build up. Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other.” (1 Corinthians 10:23-24) Our goal as those who follow the Christ should be to seek justice and righteousness in the world through faithfulness to God’s loving kindness.

PRAYER

Almighty God, guide me toward peaceful and loving ways, using my freedom to bring peace and justice to a hurting and wounded world.
Amen

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Name one injustice that you know of that needs rectifying?

Visit www.HopeForNiagara.org for more spiritual resources.

Lent 2022 – Day 14

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



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TUESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK *DOING JUSTICE*



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.

¹¹Walter Russell Bowie, *The Compassionate Christ*, Abington Press, 1965, pgs. 99-100.

¹¹¹Thomas Merton, *Lent & Easter, Wisdom from Thomas Merton*, Linguori Publications, pg. 28.

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