

**Introduction To This
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.

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 FOURTH WEEK - Day 27

DO NOT JUDGE

Luke 6:37-42

Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.

He also told them a parable: "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully qualified will be like the teacher. Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, "Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye.

SOUL SEARCH

I thank the Lord every single day for how blessed I am. And why does God bless us? God blesses us so that we may be a blessing to someone else. But in our blessedness we can get smug, so here's the thing, sometimes the hardest *judging* is for myself. We can see so much need in the world that it gets really overwhelming! We can end up feeling like we are doing nothing at all. But the solution, I think, is to focus our energy on things we can do something *about*, and leave the rest to God.

Pastors, and other people in the helping professions, meet all kinds of people; some just need a leg up in order to get their life back together and some, no matter how much you *help*, will always need some kind of assistance. I once, through the grace of God, helped someone get their life back together, or so I thought. We kept in touch for a while and he seemed to be doing ok, although he had gone back with his ex-wife, the one who had rocked his world when I met him. Although I didn't think this was a good idea he seemed fine. We stayed in touch for a while and then lost contact. I even found a busi-

ness card with his name on it at the church and thought “he must be doing ok.” I should have called him when I found the card.

Yesterday I received a letter from him - from jail - and things are not ok. To make matters worse he doesn't know how to contact me because I didn't call him when I found his business card; turns out he had lost my number. So, I am judging myself for my own easy life, and finding it hard to forgive myself for not making a simple phone call. The text says, do not judge...do not condemn...forgive... Sometimes the hardest person to apply these words to is yourself.

PRAYER

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen

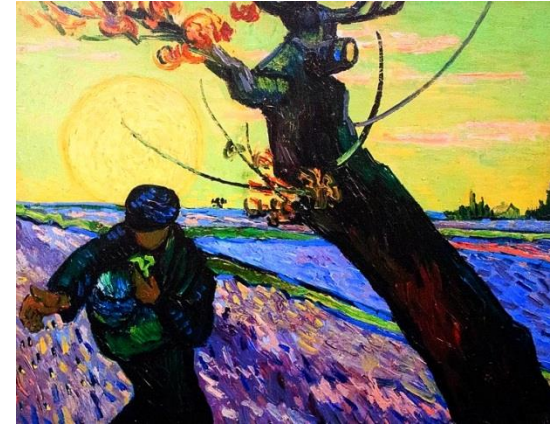
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

What have you had to *let go* of in order for God to help?

Visit www.HopeForNiagara.org for more spiritual resources.

Lent 2022 – Day 27

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



Sower With The Setting Sun, Vincent Van Gogh (1888)

MONDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK OF LENT SOUL SEARCH



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)*. *The HarperCollins Study Bible*, HarpurCollins Publishers, 1989.

Prayer of Illumination adapted from, *A Guide to Prayer for All God's People*, Job & Shawchuck, The Upper Room, p. 125.

The choice of Daily Scripture texts are taken from *Lent & Easter, Wisdom from Thomas Merton*, Linguori Publications.

¹*The HarperCollins Study Bible*, HarpurCollins Publishers, 1989, p. 2293

¹Catherine of Siena, *The Dialogue*, as quoted in *A Guide to Prayer for All God's People*, Job & Shawchuck, The Upper Room, p. 123.

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