

Introduction
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 FIFTH WEEK - Day 34

FREE FOR ALL
Matthew 5:38-42

You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

RISK LOVE

Have you ever thought of attachments as idols? Maybe you have four coats and never wear three of them anymore, but you just can't bear to part with even one—even though you see someone who clearly could use a warm coat.

Or maybe you feel like, because you worked hard for what you have, you don't have a responsibility to be generous to someone who was not able to work as hard as you. Or maybe your impulse to emotionally protect yourself above all else, keeps you from speaking up when you see an injustice—see someone else being treated unfairly.

The trouble is simple. We are often afraid to give of ourselves when there is a risk that you will not have enough later on—enough money, enough time, enough food, enough security, enough, enough energy.

Yet here is Jesus encouraging us: turn the other cheek, give more than you were asked to give, expend the extra energy even when it's hard, be generous to those in need. Living compassionately requires effort. Loving our neighbor sometimes even means giving up what we think is our due.

Jesus asks is that we love one another, and take action that shows we care; Jesus asks us to risk love.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help me to see the opportunities you put before me to serve you. Give me a creative spirit to work with those you put in my path and lead me in your way everlasting. Amen

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Name a time when you took a risk to help someone in need.

Four horizontal lines for writing reflections.

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Lent 2022 – Day 34

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



Sermon on the Mount, Károly Ferenczy (1896)

MONDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK OF LENT
RISK LOVE



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.

**One Day At A Time In Al-Anon*, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia, 1996, pg. 368-369. [ISBN:0-910034-63-X Large Print]

Visit www.HopeForNiagara.org for more spiritual resources.