

**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](http://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]

**WEDNESDAY OF THE HOLY WEEK - Day 43**

***STEADFAST OBEDIENCE***

Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher,  
that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he wakens - wakens my ear  
to listen to those who are taught.

The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious,  
I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me,  
and my cheek to those who pulled out my beard;

I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced;  
therefore I have set my face like flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

***COSTLY LOVE***

Wednesday of Passion Week. I cannot separate myself from the events of the coming days. I try to be like the disciples - not knowing yet what's coming - but I can't. I know what's coming. I know that as a 21st Century Christian I read this passage from the prophet and I see Jesus' suffering and steadfast obedience to God's command to love at all cost. And I wonder if at any time Jesus may have thought God would

ultimately spare him the agony, as he did Isaac on Mount Moriah. (Genesis 22)

Mark's Gospel tells us that this is the day when Jesus was visiting the home of Simon the leper and "as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar, and poured the ointment on his head." (Mark 14:3) This act raises a furor among the disciples because of its costliness, claiming that it could have been sold and the money given to the poor. But Jesus scolds them saying, "Why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me...She has done what she could; she has

anointed my body beforehand for its burial.” (Mark 14:6, 8) Then we learn of Judas’ plan.

Anointing invests God’s power, and sets someone aside for a Holy purpose. King David was first anointed “in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him from that day forward.” (1 Samuel 16:13) Anointing consecrates someone for a holy purpose. Anointing is blessing. Jesus is anointed in the presence of his disciples. Messiah, or Christ, means *anointed one*. The woman who anoints Jesus with her costly oil is not concerned with the monetary cost of what she is doing, but only with immersing her Lord in her loving devotion. *The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.*

*PRAYER*

“I shall listen carefully as the Church proclaims the word of your saving passion and death for the sake of all worlds, all peoples, and all time. You alone are holy, you alone are Lord, you alone, [are] Jesus [the] Christ...”\* Amen

*FOR FURTHER REFLECTION*

When has someone been critical of your generosity?

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Visit [www.HopeForNiagara.org](http://www.HopeForNiagara.org) for more spiritual resources.

# Lent 2022 – Day 43

## A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



*Entry into the City* - John August Swanson

### WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK COSTLY 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.  
\*Prayer, *Lent & Easter, Wisdom from Thomas Merton*, Linguori Publications, p. 91.  
\*\*adapted from: For Courage to Do Justice #456, *The United Methodist Hymnal*, United Methodist Publishing House, 1989.  
\*\*\*Ibid, Amazing. Grace #378, first verse.  
\*\*\*\*Prayer, *Lent & Easter, Wisdom from Thomas Merton*, Linguori Publications, p. 101.

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