

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]

EASTER SUNDAY - Day 47

HALLELUJA: CHRIST IS RISEN

Colossians 1:15-20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers - all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

NEW LIFE

At what point does the truth of Christ become real for us? For each one of us there is a particular moment in time when each of us truly knows Jesus as the Christ. This is not to say we totally understand him, or can begin to know the depth of love and pain that God experienced by allowing his son to live among us. That is not to say that we understand anything about any of that. But it is just to say that there is a moment for those of us who believe when we say, "Ah hah, I get it."

I remember my moment. I was a young mother of two sons and we were in a music store looking for a piece of music to augment my son's piano lesson. There we were looking at sheet music and I looked over at a rack of *witness wear* t-shirts. We had been attending church as a family for a year or so and I was pretty involved in Sunday School and worship. I taught the youngest class, and was invested in researching what it might have been like for Jesus' to have once been a little child just like them.

So we're in the Music Store and I see a black t-shirt that has a white transparent image of a face with a crown of thorns. In green letters it asks: "What has God ever done for you?" I am haunted by the image as I turn the shirt over to see the answer printed in green text on the back, "He gave his only son that whosoever believeth in him shall have eternal life." And THAT hit home for me; me and my two sons. Would I give even *one* of my sons to save the world? I suddenly saw

the pain God bore as he watched his son being misunderstood and maligned. Then to watch as his perfect and sinless boy was accused, betrayed, abused, beaten, whipped, spit on, and finally nailed to a cross. God's own created beings capable of such love and devotion, as well as such hatred and torture! I can only imagine God sobbed in searing agony that day! And yet, the mystery is that by way of that cross, *the fullness of God was pleased to dwell*, and life after death was affirmed in the resurrection of Christ Jesus, *the firstborn from the dead*. Christ the Lord is Risen Today, Halleluia!

PRAYER

“Reconcile [us] today, Lord Jesus...to your Father. In the power of the Holy Spirit whom you have sent to renew us in freedom and joy through the mystery of your resurrection from the dead.”**** In you Holy name we pray. Amen

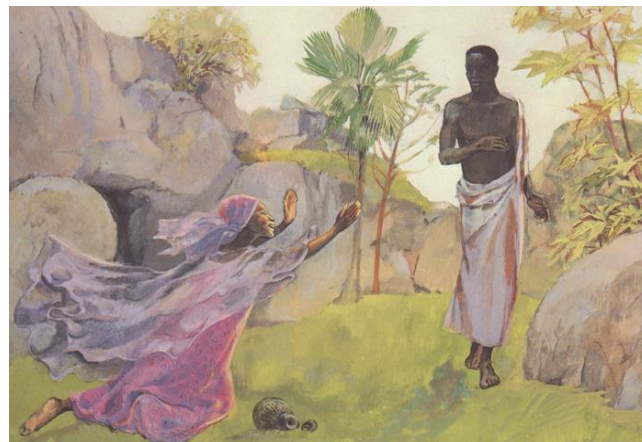
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

What was the particular moment when you believed?.

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Easter Sunday – Day 47

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



Easter - Christ appears to Mary. JESUS MAFA. (1979)

EASTER SUNDAY NEW LIFE



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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.