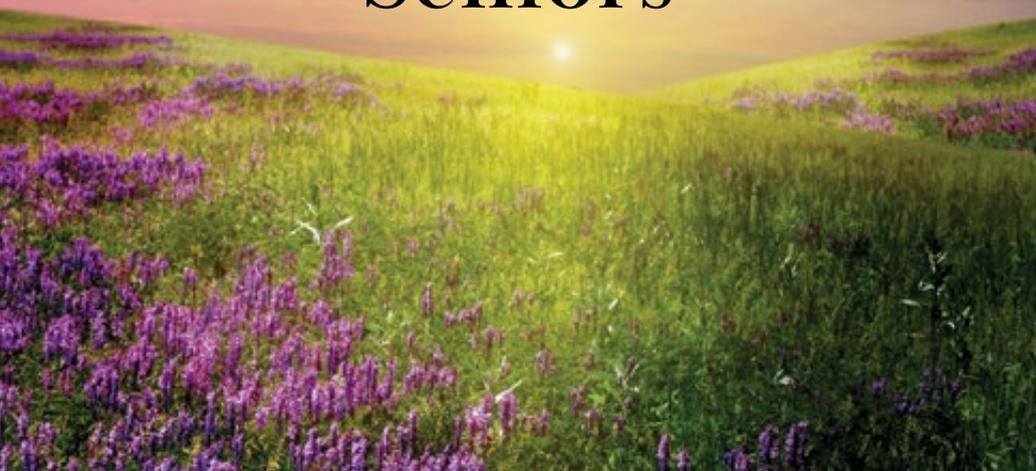


Living Hope

**Lenten
Devotions
for Catholic
Seniors**



ASH WEDNESDAY

Cross of Ashes

I have become like dust and ashes.

Job 30:19

We are like the dust and ashes that are placed on our foreheads today. But the ashes we receive are in the shape of the cross, and with that cross we have a future.

Let your cross, even in ashes, remind us that you, O Jesus, give us everlasting life. Amen.

Ponder: Ponder the cross that gives us hope forever.

Read: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

Confession

Therefore confess your sins to one another.

James 5:16

At the heart of Lent is the confession of our sins. This is a season to openly and honestly admit the wrongs we have done and then fully receive forgiveness from God.

Pour out your grace upon us, O Lord. Amen.

Share: Share the good news of God's forgiveness of all of our sins to the people around you.

Read: Psalm 32:4-5

FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

“Lenting”

In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God.

Luke 6:12

“Lenting” isn’t a word in the dictionary. Yet actively engaging in our spiritual growth offers a fresh approach to these 40 days before Easter. Years ago, perhaps you “gave up” candy during Lent. Decades later, you’re more spiritually mature. Perhaps this year you’re turning off the phone each evening to free up additional devotional time. When we quiet our minds and mentally leave the demands of daily living to focus on our walk with Jesus, we can become more alert to input from the Holy Spirit.

Early church fathers would applaud this active engagement in “Lenting.” After all, they built this season into the church calendar to support a lifelong journey with Jesus. “Lenting” allows us to spiritually reframe in preparation for a vibrant celebration of Christ’s resurrection.

*Mary Manz Simon
Ft. Myers, FL*

Lord, strengthen my resolve to focus time and attention to your Word. Amen.

Find: Discover your personal “mountain to pray” with few distractions.

Read: Mark 6:31-32; Matthew 15:29



SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

Entering Lent

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 1:17

Entering Lent may come with a sense of burden for some of us. After all, our church altars are covered in dark purple, hymns are somber, scripture readings and sermons recall the sorrow and suffering of Jesus.

But is Lent really a season of darkness? Yes, we focus on Christ's journey to the cross and grave and on our need for repentance. Yet darkness and death are not final. Jesus fulfills the law that came through Moses and removes the power of darkness. Lent reveals the work of Jesus spoken of in John 1:4, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." So we enter Lent with awe and a serious sense of sin for which Jesus suffered and died. But even in the dark before the dawn, we know that Jesus brings grace and truth, light and life.

*Marj Maynard
Pipe Creek, TX*

Lord Jesus, we enter Lent remembering all you have done to bring us life in the light of grace. Amen.

Look inside: Examine your feelings about Lent, and allow the light of Christ to enter you.

Read: Romans 5:12-17; Colossians 1:13-14

SUNDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Forty Hungry Days

And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he (Jesus) was hungry.

Matthew 4:2

Forty is a number ripe with connections. It is the official midpoint of life. You begin the slide over the hill after you turn forty. In the Bible, it is the amount of time Jesus spent before his official public ministry, fasting and defying Satan's temptations. It is the number of years Moses spent leading the Israelites through the desert to the Promised Land. Forty is even the usual number of weeks for human gestation.

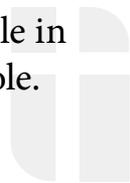
In the Jewish tradition, forty signifies a period of probation or trial. Since forty is the product of five (which signifies grace) times eight (which signifies revival or a new beginning), it gives new meaning to the forty days we spend in repentance and meditation. We are God's children, hungry for God's Word, grace, and forgiveness. We are Spirit-led through life's ups and downs to eternal life with God.

*Nancy Rapp
St. Louis, MO*

Father, make us hungry for the Bread of Life. Amen.

Research: Research other stories in the Bible in which the number forty plays a significant role.

Read: Deuteronomy 8:3; John 6:22-35



MONDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

A Unique Wilderness

The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

Mark 1:12

Reflecting on your struggles with the COVID-19 pandemic, could you be experiencing a unique Lenten wilderness with Jesus this year? Perhaps you understand being alone and isolated as part of the “vulnerable” population? Perhaps you understand being hungry for companionship, or simply eating out, or in-person worship and Bible study with others? How has Jesus helped you through your COVID-19 wilderness?

In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus moves from his Baptism with the Father and the Spirit’s ringing affirmation of his identity, through his desert wilderness experience, tempted by Satan, and onto the bold beginning of his saving ministry. In Jesus, we can live in our baptismal identity, grow through unique wilderness temptations, and proclaim Jesus’ saving love for those around us.

*Stephen J. Carter
Oakville, MO*

Lord, thanks for bringing us through our unique wilderness so that we might help others. Amen.

Help: Help someone to see Jesus in the midst of their spiritual wilderness.

Read: Mark 1:9-15

TUESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Following Jesus

As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

Luke 9:57

My wife and I were driving around town one day and happened to get stuck behind a car going "too slow." When I zipped around him, I noticed his bumper sticker read, "Do you follow Jesus this close?"

How am I following Jesus these Lenten days? Am I often in too much of a hurry that I zoom by people who might need my help and support? Am I so focused on being on time that I do not even see the people I pass by in my neighborhood, church and even my family who need to hear words of comfort, hope and forgiveness? Do I at times cut off conversations on the phone because I have too many other things I have to do?

Lent is a great time to practice the art of "slowing down" and looking at and responding to the needs of others. It is a perfect way of following Jesus.

*Rich Bimler
Bloomington, IL*

Lord, keep us on your path as you keep close to us and to others on this road of life, Amen.

Enjoy: Enjoy today's journey with the Lord, and "stop" along the way to serve and celebrate.

Read: Matthew 9:9; Luke 9:23



WEDNESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Disinfect

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

Psalm 51:2

The most coveted commodities during the COVID-19 pandemic (besides toilet paper) included disinfecting products, particularly, brands that claimed they could kill 99.9% of germs. That amount of cleaning potency is likely to keep us safe from contracting illnesses from surfaces; however, when it comes to sin, we need something even stronger to rid of us of the deadly infection that plagues us all.

There is no mild case of sin. It all leads to eternal death and separation from God. Our only hope is Jesus, the one who disinfects us completely. Jesus has the power to remove 100% of our sin, yet his cleaning power is not harsh on us. He took all the suffering we deserve upon himself and died in our place. Now he gently calls us to bathe ourselves in his mercy.

*Sandi Geis
St. Louis, MO*

Jesus, I confess I am sin-sick. Cleanse me, heal me and restore me, that I may serve and honor you. Amen.

Stock up: Collect the promises of Jesus and enjoy a daily dose of God's Word.

Read: Psalm 51:1-12; Psalm 103:1-14

THURSDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Refreshing

Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

Acts 3:19-20a

When we think of the word *Lent*, we think of fasting and repentance, and well we should, but it doesn't stop there. Lent does not have to be a time of somber drudgery. The word *Lent* is from the Old English word *lencten*, which really means spring season. It is a time of refreshment, of throwing off the old, and experiencing new growth in the Spirit.

You don't have to hold on to your sin. God promises that he has forgiven and forgotten it. He has erased it from his own omnipotent and omniscient mind. If he has forgotten it, you should too.

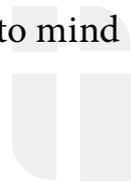
When Satan brings up a sin, tell him that it is forgotten. Live a life free from the guilt of sin!

*Jeremy Klaustermeier
Warrenton, MO*

Lord God, thank you for refreshing my soul and giving me peace. Amen.

Do: Write down past sins that keep coming to mind on a piece of paper and discard it.

Read: Jeremiah 31:31-34





In a lively page-a-day format, the devotions found in *Living Hope* are tailored for mature believers. Its hope-filled pages are a daily companion that journeys alongside readers with encouragement and inspiration, carrying them through the penitential season of Lent, with an eye toward the hope of Easter, and its heavenly promises.

This book, along with many other *Creative Communications for the Parish* products, is available on [amazonkindle](#) and [nook](#).

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