

HOPE-FULL LIVING

• *Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest* •

• *The Season of Lent* •



WELCOME to
**HOPE-FULL
LIVING**

•*Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest*•

The writers of these daily reflections take you on a Lenten journey to connect you to Christ's life on this earth, his path to the cross and the empty tomb, and his life among us now as his people whom he has called to spread the Good News of his ultimate love for us! These devotions encourage you to reflect on your sins and be renewed in your commitment to the Savior, who gives us forgiveness, life and salvation through his sacrifice. Think about what to do this Lent using this acrostic:

L—*Look* around for opportunities to serve those around you, as Christ served us.

E—*Evaluate* your spiritual life and consider ways that you can grow closer to Christ every day.

N—*Notice* the blessings that God has placed around you to remind you of his love in Christ.

T—*Tell* others about the grace that flows out from the cross to each of us throughout our lives.

Blessings as you live in Christ this Lent!

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Ash Wednesday

The Dirt You Can't See

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Psalm 51:10

I can remember it as vividly as if it were yesterday: Grandma doing her spring cleaning. She didn't just scrub the kitchen floor, she took her paring knife and scraped deep into the corners, saying, "You have to get it all—even the dirt you can't see!"

Grandma was right. Just as there was dirt hidden in those corners, there is dirt hidden in my heart. Some sins I can see; some only God can see. The difference is that I can't take the paring knife and scrape away my sin. Only God can create in me a clean heart; only God can renew a right spirit within me. And that's just what he did through the death and resurrection of his Son, my Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lent is the perfect time for spring cleaning, don't you think?

Search me, O God, and know my heart! See if there is any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Amen.

Think: What sin is hiding in your heart? Accept the forgiveness that is yours in Christ.

Read: Psalm 139; Romans 11:33-36

*Jane P. Wilke
Woodbury, MN*

Thursday After Ash Wednesday

Your Lenten “Dash”

Repent and believe in the gospel.

Mark 1:15

Recently I visited a cemetery. I walked up and down the rows reading what was engraved on the tombstones. What caught my attention that day were the dates on the tombstones. First came the date of birth, then a dash, then the date of death. The dash, I said to myself, represented the time these people lived on earth.

What about your dash? It's there waiting for your death. Are there things you'd like to change? You never know how much time is left for you. Lent is that time of year where you give special attention to correcting your lifestyle. That's repentance—turning away from sin and turning toward God, giving up selfishness in favor of following God's will, receiving God's Spirit as part of your Lenten walk with him.

Father, whatever needs changing in my life, change it for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Ask: Keep asking God to help you change things in your lifestyle that need changing.

Read: Acts 3:17-26; Ephesians 5:15-21

Walter M. Schoedel
Webster Groves, MO

Friday After Ash Wednesday

You Are My Child

“For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” And they began to celebrate.

Luke 15:24

We grow up in a world that is like a person with amnesia. It does not know who it is, where it came from, why it is here or where it is going in the midst of this vast universe. It has a sense of accountability, but does not know to whom it is accountable. So it gives its allegiance to anyone because it needs to belong to someone.

Then God comes to our world in Jesus and tells us we belong to him. He has come to bring us back to the Father, to give us a name and a family in which we belong.

Just as the father said of his prodigal son, so God says of us, “You are my child. You were dead, but now you are alive again. You were lost, but now you are found.”

What a blessing to know whose we are.

*Father, let me never forget that I belong to you.
Amen.*

Enjoy: Celebrate the gift of family with your wider family in Christ.

Read: Luke 15:1-32

*Lionel Otto
Adelaide, Australia*

Saturday After Ash Wednesday

You Are a Gift

Each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.

1 Corinthians 7:7

Jesus used a boy's lunch to feed thousands. What a difference that day must have made in his life. Maybe later, when he felt his gifts were too small to meet a task, he said, "If Jesus could use my small lunch, then surely he can expand my gifts today to help these people."

Think of the gifts that you have. What gifts do others say that you have? Write them down. Now think of ways to use those gifts. Maybe it is a skill to teach. Maybe it is to listen. Maybe you could invite a grandchild or another youth to join you in a service project like delivering meals or visiting a shut-in. Then remind the youth what a gift he or she is. In that way, you, too, become a gift to them. Certainly, YOU are a gift worth sharing.

Thank you, Jesus, for giving me ways to be a gift to others in your name. Amen.

Give: Choose a specific way this week to be a gift to someone. Then implement your plan.

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:12-15

Leo Symmank
Seabrook, TX

First Sunday of Lent

The Cross Is Bigger

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 6:14

A grandfather was walking down the street with his grandson. As they came to a church, granddad said, “See the big cross on top of the church?” His grandson looked up, pointed to the cross and shouted, “That’s not a big cross, that’s a little cross!”

Life is all about perspective. To the 70-year-old man, that cross was big because it had been the focal point for so many years to him. But to the 6-year-old boy, that symbol seemed so little, because it did not hold the rich meaning as it did to his granddad. Aging does this to people. As pieces of our secure life dwindle and are depleted, like health, finances and friends who die, Christ’s cross takes on a larger meaning. Life comes and goes, and we continue to boast in the cross of our Savior! Yes, the cross is getting bigger each day! And I’m glad!

Lord, move us to see your cross growing bigger and bigger before our eyes each day. Amen.

Show: Show someone a cross. Explain why it is big in your life.

Read: John 19:17; Luke 9:23

*Rich Bimler
Bloomington, IL*

Monday, First Week of Lent

“Gave Up” Is Not “Giving Up”

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 19:30

Did you ever just give up? Were you ever tempted to give up? Most of us have been at some point. As we age, we sometimes have to “give things up.” I recently had to stop jogging, something I have been doing for 45 years! I ride my bike instead.

When Jesus died for us, he didn’t give up. The language is important: “He gave up his spirit.” Jesus “gave up” his life on purpose—not only for us, but for those who crucified him!

God’s love for us is relentless. His love is purposeful—even when accomplishing the purpose of his love meant the willing death of his Son. Rejoice today that God does not “give up” on you!

Holy Jesus, thank you for loving us on purpose. Help me love you in return. Amen.

Talk: When you talk to others who may be difficult, don’t give up on them! Share God’s love.

Read: Psalm 119:169-176

*Don Schatz
Lynnwood, WA*

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Hope-Full Living Mission Statement

To inspire God's seniors with the assurance that
“This very day, I have a body, a mind, a spirit and
a message—God's rejuvenating Gospel message
to and through me—to share with my world, my
friends and my Lord.”

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