

A sunset over a golden field with a cross on a hill. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with clouds catching the low sun. In the foreground, a path of tall, golden grass leads to a small green hill where a simple black cross stands. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

PSALMS

— FOR —

LENT

Devotions *for the* Sacred Season

Creative
Communications
Sample

JANE WILKE

ASH WEDNESDAY

LOVE: PSALM 136

*Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever. PSALM 136:1*

Love. Isn't love what Ash Wednesday is all about? What better day to focus on the greatest gift of love ever given—the gift of God's own Son, Jesus, sent to be our Savior from sin.

Each day in Lent, we'll explore a different psalm, considering the heart of the psalmist as we reflect and refocus so that our own hearts might be reshaped in repentance. We'll see how the psalms give shape to our own thoughts and feelings as we, too, come before God on this journey to the foot of the cross that culminates in victory over sin, death and the devil.

In this psalm, we find a picture of true love. The same mighty God who made us loved us enough to save us. He demonstrates love to us time and again and, though our own efforts fall short, his love never wavers.

**Lenten Lord, embrace me today within the circle
of your abiding love of rescue and redemption. Amen.**

Read Psalm 136 and John 3:16-18.



THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

LONELINESS: PSALM 25

*Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted. PSALM 25:16*

Loneliness. Have you ever been surrounded by plenty of people, yet still felt lonely? If so, you aren't alone. It's been estimated that at least 40% of us will feel the ache of loneliness at some point in our lives. Often, it's not about how many relationships we have; it's about how connected we feel within those relationships.

We see in the words of Psalm 25 that David, the psalmist, is reaching out to God. He has lived through defeats and failures and, although he has repeatedly prayed to God for direction, he feels disconnected. Yet he doesn't stop reaching out. In verse 5 he says, "For you I wait all the day long."

How connected are you? If you've let opportunities for connecting with others fall by the wayside, there's still time. More importantly, take time for a heart-to-heart with God. Sin is the ultimate dis-connector, but God re-connected us to himself through Jesus. Pour out your needs, your fears and your thanks to him.

Jesus, hold onto me, listen to me and never let me go. Amen.

Read Psalm 25 and Matthew 28:20.



FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

OBSTACLES: PSALM 3

*But you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory,
and the lifter of my head. PSALM 3:3*

Obstacles come in all shapes and sizes and they stand ready to defeat us. Whether from loss, disappointment, injury, addiction, crumbling relationships or personal setbacks, one thing is certain—every obstacle is a result of sin in our world.

As we read through Psalm 3, we realize the obstacles that pressed down upon David. He was running for his life, consumed with conflicts at every turn. But instead of keeping his eyes on the obstacles, he focused on God's deliverance. He was confident that no conflict could ever separate him from God's presence and power.

What obstacles are you facing today? What threatens to overwhelm as it holds you in the grip of sin? Look to him who defeated sin, death and the power of Satan by taking our sins to the cross. Stand tall in the confidence that he can help you overcome the obstacles that overwhelm and turn defeat into victory.

Risen Lord, surround me with your love. Deliver me from every hindrance to peace and help me to walk in your victory. Amen.

Read Psalm 3 and Romans 8:37-39.

SATURDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY
VALLEYS: PSALM 23

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me. PSALM 23:4*

For every peak in life, there seems to be a valley. When all seems right in the world and everything is going as planned, that's the peak. But in quick succession, we find ourselves in the valley, and we can look at it either as a curse or as a blessing.

As you read or recite Psalm 23, consider the sheep, who, if they stayed on the peak, would never find the green pastures of the valley. Left on our own, we'd bask in the glory of every peak moment in life. But our Good Shepherd knows that pride and arrogance only lead us astray, so he gently turns us and directs us to the waters of refreshment found only in the valley.

And when it comes time to trek through the valley of death, Christ will safely guide all who believe to live with him forever. A blessing indeed.

**Good Shepherd, guide me in the paths of
righteousness, all the days of my life. Amen.**

Read Psalm 23 and John 10:14-18.

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

AWE: PSALM 66

Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!" PSALM 66:3

Usually it takes something magnificent to elicit a response of astonishment, reverence and amazement. We save our awe for the incredible, but what about the everyday moments in life?

Psalm 66 was written as a song to be used in worship. The first verses lead us to shout for joy and, with all the earth, sing praises to God. What comes next is a litany of the wonderful things God has done throughout history and those things he continues to do for us. He tests us in the valley and leads us to the peaks. He sees us through conflicts and prepares us for his purposes.

We are reminded that God's love is awesome because it is ever faithful, every moment of every day. And for every time that we cried out and he answered, we fall on our knees in awe.

**Awesome Savior, fill my heart with awe and my mouth
with praise at the wonders of your love. Amen.**

Read Psalm 66 and Matthew 17:1-8.



MONDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

BROKENHEARTEDNESS: PSALM 34

*The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit. PSALM 34:18*

Brokenheartedness. It's not a word we use very often; but, I dare say, it's something to which we can all relate. One can even die of a broken heart; it's called broken heart syndrome and it's brought on by intense, sudden stress.

There are many things that trigger brokenheartedness—not necessarily the dying kind, but the kind that makes us die inside. When we think about it, we realize that God most certainly knows what it's like to have his heart broken. It first happened in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve fell into sin. And since that time, it happens over and over, each time we sin. Yet, as the psalmist tells us, God continues to save and deliver us. Though we continue to reject and betray him, he keeps calling us back and redeems us through the ultimate rejection and betrayal of Christ on the cross.

Are you feeling broken today? Hand your broken heart to God, who will carry your burden and lead you to peace.

Healing Lord, take my broken heart and make it whole. Amen.

Read Psalm 34 and Matthew 11:28-30.



TUESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

OBEDIENCE: PSALM 119

*The LORD is my portion; I promise to keep your words... when I
think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies. PSALM 119:57, 59*

Obedience. This word almost immediately conjures up images of a higher authority. Someone, somewhere—parent, teacher, boss—tells us what we're

supposed to do and if we follow the instructions, we obey; if not, we disobey.

But what's our motivation for obeying? To look good? To not get into trouble? To earn "extra credit"? Some look upon God's Word as a list of instructions to be followed for those very reasons, almost as if obedience is only about currying favor. That's an "if-then" type of thinking: If we do this, then God will bless us. That, however, puts the focus on us and our obedience, which, in our sinfulness, is misplaced.

Instead, let our motivation for obedience be a "because-therefore" approach: Because of what God has done for us through Christ's death and resurrection, therefore, we gratefully respond with obedience, confident that God is indeed our portion and his loving forgiveness is our treasure.

Lenten Lord, give me an obedient heart, grateful to you. Amen.

Read Psalm 119:57-64 and James 1:22-25.

WEDNESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

SELFISHNESS: PSALM 15

O LORD, ... who shall dwell on your holy hill? He who walks blamelessly and does what is right. PSALM 15:1-2

Selfishness finds its way into every corner of life, from how we view ourselves to how we treat others. It creeps into our attitudes, our words, our actions and our decisions. One week into our Lenten journey is as good a day as any for checking our I-sight.

We have the most perfect picture of unselfishness in Christ, our Savior. He was both God and man, which means he was also tempted. Yet he set aside any hint of sinful nature and self-interest to take our sins to the cross. He took our death upon himself so that we might live forgiven here on earth and forever in heaven.

Let's reframe our I-sight to look away from ourselves toward serving others in selfless love like Jesus.

**Giving Lord, help me see others through
the lens of your love. Amen.**

Read Psalm 15 and John 13:1-18.

THURSDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

PRAYER: PSALM 86

*Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace.
In the day of trouble I call upon you, for you answer me. PSALM 86:6-7*

Some of my earliest memories are of praying as I crawled into bed, right before my mom tucked me in. Just thinking about it brings feelings of comfort and security in being loved.

Security in God's love is what prompts King David to write Psalm 86. The psalm serves as a beautiful model for how to pray. We see all the aspects of prayer: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication. We realize that our needs drive us to pray to a loving God who is abundant in mercy, and that when we pray we can do so earnestly, continually, thankfully and humbly.

The entire psalm is a portrait of how completely David trusts in God to hear him and to answer him. So, how about you and me? Shouldn't it be even easier for us to pour out our hearts to the one who loves us unconditionally—who created us, saved us and will never let us go?

Listening Lord, draw me close and accept the prayers I offer. Amen.

Read Psalm 86 and Matthew 6:5-14.

FRIDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

DOUBT: PSALM 13

*How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me? PSALM 13:1*

Doubt. There's no doubt about it—at one time or another, we all have doubts. The question is, what do we do with our doubts?

Here in Psalm 13 we find David praying his doubts with such direct honesty that it almost makes us uncomfortable. After all, it's one thing to think such things, but to say them out loud, and to God no less, is pretty jarring. First, let's consider what was happening to David at the time. He was being pursued by King Saul, and on numerous occasions he had almost been killed. During his suffering, God seemed far away. David didn't feel God's presence or sense his power.

I can relate. Can you? The difference is that too often we feel that giving



PSALMS FOR LENT

Devotions for the Sacred Season

JANE WILKE

Walk through the Psalms with an eye toward the cross of Christ with these daily reflections for Lent that focus on repentance, reconciliation and renewal. Each day will include specially selected verses from a psalm with prompts at the end of each reflection to read the entire psalm referenced. Be enriched each day by the words of this ancient songbook that speak directly to our journey with the Lord.

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

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