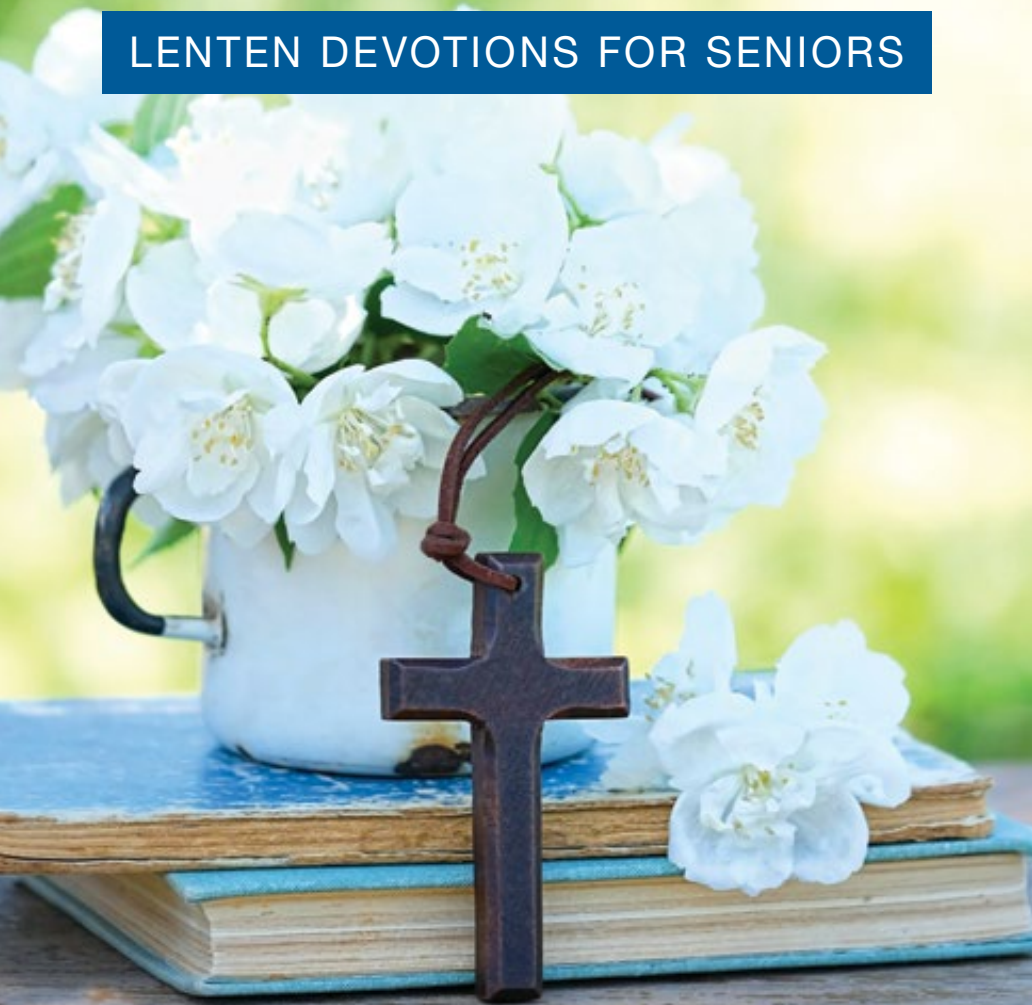


# A SEASON OF HOPE

LENTEN DEVOTIONS FOR SENIORS



ASH WEDNESDAY

# Return

*...return to me with all your heart...*

✚ **JOEL 2:12**

We return to the Lord this season with our whole self, our whole commitment, our whole trust in him. Lent is not a time to do things halfway. For Jesus went all the way to the cross for us and gave us his all.

**HELP US** *to wholeheartedly follow you, Jesus. Amen.*

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**TURN:** Turn away from sin, and turn toward God.

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**READ:** Joel 2:12-14

THURSDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

# Listen to Him

*My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.* ✚ **JOHN 10:27**

Turn off the sounds of those things that distract you from your faith, and listen only to the Lord. What he has to say to you is more important than anything else you hear.

**OPEN OUR EARS** *to hear your words of hope. Amen.*

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**QUIET:** Quiet your mind to pay attention to Jesus.

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**READ:** John 10:27-30

FRIDAY AFTER ASH WEDNESDAY

# The Reason for the Season

*Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience.* ✚ **COLOSSIANS 3:12**

Lent is not just a season; there is a reason for Lent. The reason for the season is hope. We have hope because we know how it all turns out: Our loving Lord suffered, died and rose again for us and continues to live in and through us. What a Lord we have to love and worship each day! This season provides us with the opportunities to thank the Lord for his love and forgiveness and to share these with those he puts around us. Wherever we live, and regardless of our own circumstances, we are empowered by the Lord to bring love and joy to all. We know in faith that he is here. The signs are all around us. The Lord empowers each of us, regardless of age, to make Lent well spent by seeking out the lost, the lonely and the last.

**RICH BIMLER** | *Bloomington, IL*

**LORD OF LENT, EMPOWER ME** *to share your love and forgiveness with those you have put around me. Amen.*

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**LIST:** Make a list of those you want to reach out to.

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**READ:** Colossians 3:12-17

# In Life and Death

*... and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts ...*

✦ **ROMANS 5:5 (ESV)**

Last Lent, our son Mark told us that his father-in-law Ray was near death. Ray lived his faith with his children, grandchildren and church family, always pointing to Jesus, his Savior, with quiet persistence. In his last hours, he expressed to family his hope of living with the Lord forever. My wife and I were deeply moved by the family's witness to Jesus at Ray's funeral.

Paul in Romans 5 described that Lenten hope in life and death: "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (v. 8, ESV). "Justified by faith ... we rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (vv. 1-2, ESV). "We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope" (vv. 3-4, ESV). "And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts ... " (v. 5, ESV). What hope we have!

**STEPHEN J. CARTER** | Oakville, MO

**IN LIFE, IN DEATH, O Lord, abide with me. Amen.**

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**PONDER:** How might you offer Lenten hope to one person this week?

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**READ:** Romans 5:1-11

SUNDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

# Into the Desert

*In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.*

✦ MARK 1:35

When I was in high school—a *very* long time ago!—I was not hopeless in math, but it was still hard for me. I'd struggle with my homework at night, and yes, it would be a true struggle. I could not make the concepts, much less the applications, make sense to me. So I would give up and go to sleep. Perhaps you might guess what happened the next day. I'd wake up, look at the unfinished problems, and I would, in a flash, *understand*.

Away from the immediacy of the struggle, the brain does the work it seems.

Lent might be a way of letting this happen in our spiritual lives. We can't leave completely, but we can follow Jesus into the desert in our own way by setting aside and sacrificing some of the distracting aspects of ordinary life. In their absence, who knows what the Spirit will make clear?

AMY WELBORN | Birmingham, AL

**SPIRIT**, *help me grow in peace and wisdom. Amen.*

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**DO:** Find a way to follow Jesus into the “desert,” away from distractions.

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**READ:** Philippians 4:4-9

MONDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

# Prayer and Thankfulness

*Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.* ✚ **COLOSSIANS 4:2**

Have you set aside extra time for prayer this Lent? Are you praying regularly each day or doing some extra Scripture reading and study? When you sit down to pray, begin with a moment of gratitude for the blessings of the day. As we age, we reawaken to the preciousness of each day. When we are thankful, we bring ourselves into right relationship with God, to whom we owe all that is right and true and good in our lives. And, when you come to your prayer requests and petitions, if it feels as though you are praying the same prayers you have said for weeks—or even years—pray them with zeal today!

Do not grow weary in bringing the desires of your heart to our Lord. God hears and will answer every prayer in his own time and for the highest good. It is our part to speak those heartfelt yearnings again and again as they are taken up into the great plan of God's will for each of us.

**JENNIFER CHRIST** | Milwaukee, WI

**KEEP US** *in constant prayer, O Lord, that we may find strength and assurance from you. Amen.*

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**GO:** Go now and speak your desires to our Lord; he awaits you!

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**READ:** Matthew 7:7; Philippians 4:19

TUESDAY, THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

# Never Too Old

*Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.*

✦ **GENESIS 12:1**

God sent seventy-five-year-old Abram on an epic journey of faith. Accepting the challenge to leave all he held dear—his homeland and most of his family—Abram trusts in God's promise to guide his footsteps and bless his offspring abundantly. He has hope in what is to come.

Lent calls us on a spiritual journey. As we see many times in Scripture, we are never too old to adjust our habits or lifestyle and accept a change of heart. We are challenged to grow spiritually, which requires us to step out in faith, beyond our habitual prayer practices or lack thereof and let go of the distractions keeping us from hearing God's call to change our ideas of what is possible with God's grace. So radical was Abram's growth that God changed his name to Abraham, father of all nations. We are people of hope: Nothing is impossible with God.

**DEBORAH A. MEISTER** | *Kirkwood, MO*

**LORD, BLESS** *my Lenten days with opportunities for change. Amen.*

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**PRAY:** Take time in prayerful silence to reflect on Abram's journey and your own.

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**READ:** Genesis 12

# A SEASON OF HOPE

LENTEN DEVOTIONS FOR SENIORS



We are called to live in hope in every season of our lives. The daily devotions in this large print special edition for Lent highlight the message and theme of hope for older adult Christian readers. Each reflection helps seniors ponder Christ's journey to the cross and empty tomb for their salvation and encourages them to share with younger generations the hope they have within them through Jesus.

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