

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]

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY - Day 40

ENTER: THE KINGDOM

Luke 19:36-42

As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching. The path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God. Joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power they had seen, saying,

"Blessed is the king

who comes in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven,

and glory in the highest heaven!

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."

IT WAS POLITICAL

According to Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan,ⁱⁱⁱ this Palm Sunday entrance into Jerusalem was a highly orchestrated event. It is Passover, the time of year when thousands of pilgrims descend on Jerusalem to celebrate the most important holiday for the Jewish people: their liberation from the Egyptian Empire. But currently they find themselves under the oppression of the Roman Empire. That empire knows that Passover brings crowds, empowering certain groups, like the Zealots, to try to attain their own liberation. These are not usually peaceful demonstrations, so Roman troops are sent into Jerusalem to subdue rioters and keep the peace of Rome, or *Pax Romana*.

The authors point out that "two processions entered Jerusalem" that day. Pilate's procession entered from the west displaying imperial power (all authority and power over the people) and Roman imperial theology (Caesar is a son of God.) They proceed to the city as a "calvary on horses, foot soldiers, leather armor, helmets, weapons, banners, golden eagles mounted on poles, sun glinting on metal and gold...[The sounds of] marching feet, the creaking of leather, the clinking of bridles, the beating of drums..."

Jesus proceeds from the east “humble and riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey [as prophesied by Zechariah 9:9].” He is accompanied by a band of peasants, waving palms, and praising Jesus as the *king who comes in the name of the Lord!* According to Zechariah this king will: “...cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war-horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations.” (Zechariah 9:10) So the stage is set: troops from the west carrying the power of the Roman Empire, and Jesus from the east ushering in the kingdom of God. These two conflicting powers descending on Jerusalem anticipate the showdown of events during Holy Week.

PRAYER

Reveal to us your ways of peace and how we may usher in the kingdom here on earth. Amen

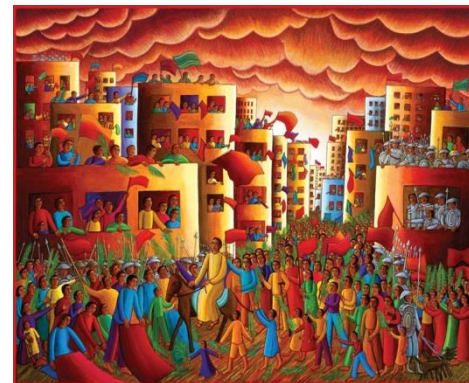
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Name one thing you can do to usher in the peaceable kingdom.

Visit www.HopeForNiagara.org for more spiritual resources.

Lent 2022 – Day 40

A Guide for Devotion and Prayer



Entry into the City - John August Swanson

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY IT WAS POLITICAL



This week’s devotional resource was written by Rev. Wendy Depew Partelow, President of the American Baptist Churches of New York State Board of Missions, and edited by Rev. Mark H. Breese of Community Missions. The content was created specifically keeping in mind the populations served by Community Missions.

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.
- ⁱInvocation, *A Guide to Prayer for All God’s People*, Shawchuck and Job, Upper Room Books, p. 137.
- ⁱⁱCarlo Carretto, *In Search of the Beyond*, as quoted in *A Guide to Prayer for All God’s People*, Shawchuck and Job, Upper Room Books, p. 138-9.
- ⁱⁱⁱMarcus J. Borg & John Dominic Crossan, *The Last Week*, HarperCollins Publishers, 2006. From pgs. 2-4.
- ^{iv}www.blueletterbible.org, glorified, using Strong’s Lexicon #G1392.