

Advent Lutheran Church Lenten Devotion Writing Guide – 2019

For this year's Lenten Devotional, entitled, "Journey to the Cross," I am excited to ask YOU, the members and friends of Advent Lutheran to prayerfully consider contributing to our devotional booklet by *writing* the devotionals!

Deadlines

You are asked to inform me of your interest to write in this devotional by signing the *Interest Sign-Up Sheet* in the Narthex by Sunday January 20, 2019. Then, you will select one or more dates/texts on the *Text Sign-Up Sheet* and have your writings submitted to me by email by February 6th. At that point, each devotional will be reviewed by me to make sure we don't have any doctrinal concerns. Also, we will edit for typos. Then, the completed devotionals will be put into a booklet for our use during Lent this year, which begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6.

Further Thoughts

Though we may not have enough submissions to have a day to day devotional, it is my hope that we will have a nice selection of writings by many people connected to Advent Lutheran!

The selected Biblical texts come from the four Gospels and are taken from the time of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem up to His death and then Resurrection on Easter.

After you have selected your text for the date you wish, begin to prayerfully spend time with it. Read the passage multiple times and through a variety of translations, if you wish. Should you want any help please contact me. BibleGateway.com has many translations you could look at. Please just inform which you are using when you submit your writing. The main versions to consider would be ESV, NIV, NLT, RSV or NKJV. As you study, you may wish to printout your passage and highlight or underline key words or phrases. On your notes, write out thoughts and questions as you have them. Also, using the attached *Meditating on the Scriptures Sheet* may prove helpful.

During your meditation and review, you might ask:

- 1) Is there a specific sin that is addressed in this text?
- 2) How does this text point to Christ and all He has done for me?
- 3) What is this text leading me to pray for/about?

Once you have spent time in prayerful preparation, write from your heart about what the passage has said to you. Keep the devotion between about 300-500 words. You may have some questions and/or challenges for the reader to consider and then end with a prayer. These devotions will help guide others to see what Christ has done for them and for their salvation, while they see your heart as you share your devotional thought.

Thank you for being a part of this special Lenten project, and may the Lord bless you all daily!

Pastor Scott

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Journey to the Cross Lenten Devotional – Text Sign-Up Sheet

When you have written your devotion and prayer, save it as a Word document and send it to *scott_lohman@sbcglobal.net* and *kmkbyrnes@gmail.com*. Should you use GoogleDocs, please let us know at the same email addresses.

Ash Wednesday, March 6

Writer

Mar 6: Mt 21:1-10 [Triumphal entry]

Mar 7: Mk 11:12-18 [Temple cleared]

Mar 8: Mt 21:18-22 [Fig tree withers]

Mar 9: Lk 20:1-8 [Jesus' authority questioned]

First Sunday in Lent, March 10

Mar 11: Jn 12:37-50 [Unbelief of the Jews]

Mar 12: Mk 12:1-12 [Parable of tenants]

Mar 13: Mt 22:1-14 [Parable of wedding banquet]

Mar 14: Mk 12:13-17 [Paying taxes to Caesar]

Mar 15: Mt 22:34-40 [Greatest Commandment]

Mar 16: Mk 12:35 [Whose son?]

Second Sunday in Lent, March 17

Mar 18: Lk 21:1-4 [Widow's mite]

Mar 19: Mt 23:1-39 [Seven woes]

Mar 20: Mk 13:32-37 [Day and hour unknown]

Mar 21: Mk 14:1-9 [Jesus anointed at Bethany]

Mar 22: Mt 25:1-13 [Parable of virgins]

Mar 23: Mt 25:31-46 [Sheep & goats]

Third Sunday in Lent, March 24

Mar 25: Lk 22:1-6 [Plot against Jesus]

Mar 26: Mk 14:12-16 [Preparations for Passover]

Mar 27: Jn 13:1-17 [Jesus washes disciples feet]

Mar 28: Jn 13:18-30 [Jesus predicts betrayal]

Mar 29: Jn 13:31-38 [Jesus predicts denial by Peter]

Mar 30: Jn 14:1-14 [Jesus comforts His Disciples]

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 31

Apr 1: Jn 14:15-31 [Jesus promises the Holy Spirit] _____

Apr 2: Mt 26:26-29 [Jesus institutes Communion] _____

Apr 3: Lk 22:39-46 [Gethsemane] _____

Apr 4: Jn 17 [Jesus' High Priestly Prayer] _____

Apr 5: Lk 22:47-53 [Jesus arrested] _____

Apr 6: Mt 26:57-67 [Jesus before the Sanhedrin] _____

Fifth Sunday in Lent, April 7

Apr 8: Mt 26:69-75 [Peter's denials] _____

Apr 9: Mt 27:1-10 [Judas hangs himself] _____

Apr 10: Mk 15:1-15 [Jesus before Pilate] _____

Apr 11: Mt 27:24-26 [Barabbas released; Jesus flogged] _____

Apr 12: Mt 27:27-31 [Soldiers mock Jesus] _____

Apr 13: Lk 23:32-38 [First word: "Father, forgive them"] _____

Palm Sunday, April 14

Apr 15: Lk 23:39-43 [Second word: "Today, paradise!"] _____

Apr 16: Jn 19:25-27 [Third word: "Woman, your son"] _____

Apr 17: Mk 15:33-36 [Fourth word: "Forsaken!"] _____

Apr 18: Jn 19:28-30 [Words five & six: "Thirsty; It is finished!"] _____

Apr 19: Lk 23:44-49 [Final word: "Into Your hands..."] _____

Apr 20: Mt 27:57-66 [Jesus buried] _____

Easter Sunday, April 21

Apr 21: Mt 28: 1-10 [Resurrection!] _____

The accounts found in these texts comprise the greatest part of the greatest story the world has ever known! As you read through them, consider:

What has the Lord done for me?

What am I going to do about it?

Meditating on the Scriptures – Compiled by Rev. Loy Schlote

Richard Foster in Celebration of Discipline begins the chapter on meditation with these words: “In contemporary society our Adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry, and crowds.” The author is pointing out that if the Enemy can keep us busy and distracted, we will not have time to get to know God nor the things of God. Others have spoken of the “tyranny of the urgent” that can keep us from accomplishing the important things and those things that have eternal value. Thus, it is crucial that we slow down and stay centered on the Lord and His Word.

Meditation in the context of the Christian faith is not Eastern meditation. Eastern meditation attempts to empty the mind; Christian meditation is an attempt to fill the mind by keeping our focus on the Word of God. As we clear our minds from all the external distractions, we are enabled to concentrate and connect with the Lord as He speaks to us through His Word and we respond back in contemplative prayer.

Martin Luther described the process with three words: **oratio**, **meditatio**, and **tentatio**. First, pray. Ask the Lord, to work and to show You His ways. Second, meditate. Think deeply on the truths found in His Word. Thirdly, experience that truth – put it into practice. Embrace the truth and let it become part of you. As you meditate, you begin to internalize and personalize the passages and the concepts you find there. As the Spirit works, you get into the Word and the Word gets into you!

It may be important for you to find a place that is quiet and free from interruptions. You may want to have reflective music playing softly in the background or you may find that silence is more helpful to you. You will want to have your Bible and a journal or tablet with you so that you can record your insights.

Sometimes it is helpful to sit quietly for your time of meditation. Other times you may find it helpful to combine a physical activity with your meditation (walking, swimming, or riding a bike). If you are away from your desk while contemplating the Scriptures, be sure to take time to write out your thoughts in your journal when you return.

If you have a Study Bible, you might pick some of the key words in your passage and check out some of the cross references or chain references. You can also take a look at the passage in a variety of traditional and contemporary translations or paraphrases. After looking at several translations, you may want to try to put the verse into your own words.

We Pray: Lord, open my eyes of faith that I may see You. Let my ears be unstopped that I may hear You. Allow my mind to be sensitive to know You. Keep my heart gentle that I may receive all You have for me. Open Your Scriptures to me and bless me by Your continued grace according to my deepest need. Amen.

Sample devotion

Be Strong & Courageous!

By ~~~

Do not let this book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything that is written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord Your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:8-9

There is much in life that can intimidate us or leave us discouraged. This is especially true when we are trying to make changes in our lives or to begin something new that God is inviting us into.

As we make these new beginnings, it is crucial for us to spend time in the Scriptures. We not only read them, but in the power of the Spirit apply them to our everyday lives and relationships. These Scriptures remind us again and again who we are as children of God and that the Lord is with us every step of the way. As we live out those things that have been written for us, then we will truly be prosperous and successful—not necessarily as the world defines these, but living life fully the way God intended. As we live that way before the watching world, we will have the chance to speak to people about God and His promises!

Questions: Lord, what are You saying to me in this text? What would You have me do in response to it?

Challenge: Watch for opportunities today to share the hope that you have in Christ with someone who is discouraged or fearful.

Lord, help me to be strong and courageous as I live out my life of faith in a culture that is often hostile to You and Your ways. Help me not only to know Your truth, but to live it out in my daily life. At those moments when I find myself feeling fearful or discouraged, remind me once again that You will be with me every step of the way! Help me also to come alongside others as they face challenges in their lives to remind them of Your presence with them and Your promises for them. In Your name, Lord Jesus, I pray. Amen.