



LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

**CROP
HUNGER WALK** 
ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME
BY  **CWS**

ASH WEDNESDAY

Read

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 6:1-6;16-21

CWS STORY: Clean Water, New Beginnings



Cambodian families attain their right to water and reduce burdens through community-built ponds and education about clean water.

cwsglobal.org/stories/clean-water-new-beginnings-how-community-wells-are-changing-lives-in-cambodia/

Reflect

Fasting can feel complicated in 2026. Whether we're fasting from certain foods, stepping away from social media, or giving up something else for the Lenten season, we've all heard the familiar comments - the person who keeps reminding everyone they can't have chocolate, or the dramatic announcement that someone will be "offline for forty days." If we're honest, sometimes we've even been that person ourselves.

But in today's scripture, Jesus reminds us that this was never meant to be the focus. Fasting isn't about spectacle or proving how much we're sacrificing, but rather steadfast devotion. Each morning, we simply get up and wash our face - an ordinary act that becomes holy when we remember what a gift it is to have clean water at our fingertips. That simple moment can also turn our hearts outward, reminding us of neighbors around the world, like those in Cambodia, whose lives are being transformed through access to clean water.

When we fast in this spirit, the focus shifts away from ourselves and turns back to God who gently redirects us toward the people who need care, dignity, and hope the most. In this way, our fasting becomes less about what we give up and more about who we are becoming: people whose devotion to God naturally flows into love for our neighbors.

What do you hope to fast from this Lent or what spiritual discipline do you hope to better incorporate in your day-to-day life? How do you hope this practice will help draw you closer in in your relationship with God to then be sent out to do good?

Pray

Lord of hope, as we await the arrival of your Son, open our eyes to the waiting places of the world: the borders, the shelters, the homes where fear lingers and grace is hard to see. Move our hearts to listen deeply, to act justly, and to walk beside those who wait for a safe place to call home. Grant us the faith to see our neighbor as Christ sees us and the courage to respond. Amen.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Read

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 4:1-11

CWS STORY: From Earthquake to Hurricane



Rebuilding homes and water systems that stand strong through successive disasters

cwsglobal.org/stories/from-earthquake-to-hurricane-resilience-in-action-for-communities-in-haiti/

Reflect

Jesus enters the wilderness not by accident but led by the Spirit into a place of testing, vulnerability, and dependence on God. In that wilderness, Jesus resists the temptation to grasp quick power and instead chooses faithfulness, trust, and obedience. The CWS story from Haiti reflects a similar journey. Communities facing repeated earthquakes and hurricanes could have surrendered to despair, yet they chose resilience, rebuilding homes and water systems designed to endure what may come again. This season invites us into the same kind of faithful perseverance. Like Jesus and like these communities, we are called to remain rooted in hope, trusting that God is present in the struggle and that lasting strength is formed not by shortcuts, but by steady faith.

How does the resilience of communities in Haiti challenge or encourage your own journey of faith?

Pray

God of the wilderness, you meet us in places of struggle and uncertainty. Strengthen us to choose faithfulness over fear and trust over quick solutions. We lift up communities in Haiti and all those rebuilding after disaster; may their resilience remind us of your enduring presence. Lead us forward with courage, hope, and obedience. Amen.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Read

GOSPEL READING: John 3:1-17

CWS STORY: Finding Safety



How One Afghan Teen Escaped Exploitation and Found Support in Serbia - a story of seeking refuge and dignity through assistance and care.

cwsglobal.org/stories/finding-safety-how-one-afghan-teen-escaped-exploitation-and-found-support-in-serbia/

Reflect

God's love, as revealed in John 3:16–17, is expansive and sacrificial—extending to every person, especially the vulnerable. Yusuf's story embodies this love in action: after enduring exploitation and danger as a refugee, he found safety and support through CWS's partnership with InfoPark in Serbia. This care did not restore only physical safety but also dignity, echoing the divine intention that all people live with worth and hope. When we welcome those fleeing danger we become instruments of God's love, making visible the promise that no one is beyond care or belonging.

How does seeing the image of God in people that might not look like you, speak like you, or live where you live help expand your current understanding of God's image, grace, and favor?

Pray

Loving God, your love for the world knows no bounds, and in that love, you call us to act. We thank you for the safety and support Yusuf found, and we remember all who still seek refuge. Give us compassionate hearts and courageous hands to welcome, protect, and restore dignity to those in need. May our actions reflect your boundless love for all people. Amen.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Read

GOSPEL READING: John 4:5-14

CWS STORY: Cultivating Hope



Rigoberto's Garden in Honduras — growing food that nourishes family and community while sharing abundantly with neighbors.

cwsglobal.org/stories/cultivating-hope-rigobertos-garden-in-honduras/

Reflect

Jesus' simple request, "Give me a drink", breaks through social, cultural, and spiritual barriers. At the well, he names a real, human thirst, but he also points to a deeper one: a longing for life that is shared, restored, and overflowing. By crossing boundaries and engaging the Samaritan woman with dignity, Jesus shows that God's life-giving grace is never meant to be hoarded; it is offered freely and multiplies when shared.

Rigoberto's garden in Honduras reflects that same living water in action. By cultivating the land to nourish his family and generously sharing its abundance with neighbors, he turns limited resources into a source of community and hope. Like Jesus at the well, Rigoberto responds to need with openness and trust, allowing what he has to become life for others. His story invites us to ask how we might tend our own "gardens" of our time, skills, and resources so that they quench thirst, break down barriers, and help communities flourish together.

In what ways does Rigoberto's garden reflect the idea of "living water" shared with others? What resources or gifts do you have that could nourish others and strengthen the community? How can small acts of generosity lead to deeper relationships and lasting change?

Pray

God of living water, you meet us at the wells of our lives and invite us to share what we have. Break down the barriers that keep us from one another and help us see the thirst around us with compassion. Like Rigoberto tending his garden, teach us to cultivate our gifts with care and generosity, so that our lives may nourish others and build community. May your grace flow through us, bringing life, hope, and renewal. Amen.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Read

GOSPEL READING: John 9:1-41

CWS STORY: From Displacement to Independence



Twin Sisters Rebuild Their Lives in Serbia — rebuilding identity, community, and purpose through creativity and work.

cwsglobal.org/stories/from-displacement-to-independence-twin-sisters-rebuild-their-lives-in-serbia/

Reflect

God's gentle yet mighty love removes barriers and allows the blind man to see for the first time in his life. Yet this act of removing the barrier of blindness and giving new perspective through the power of Jesus' miracle is questioned, even condemned by the leaders of that time. Jesus remains steadfast in speaking the certainty of the power of God. This same bravery is seen by those fleeing violence and war more often than each second ticking on a clock throughout the day. As we read about the bravery that Tetiana and Valeriia carried with them into their journey as they search to build a new life, we are reminded that there is hope. God gifts each of us moments, gifts, and experiences as opportunities. Just as the blind man, an outcast from society sees in a new light, just as Tetiana and Valeriia, use these experiences for the goodness of society, so do we carry eyes to see new light and hope with even a glimmer of hope and faith for what God's power can do to transform barriers in our world and ourselves.

Can you imagine what it would be like to see for the first time? How is this a concept that we can apply to ourselves?

What barriers do we see in our world that prevent us from seeing full dignity and potential in others? What barriers do we see in ourselves that have this same impact on how we see others?

Pray

God of miracles, just as you opened the eyes of the blind man, instructing him to wash his eyes and see for the first time, help us to see others without the barriers we carry. Wash our eyes anew to see the beauty of your creation and the dignity in each life you have created. Help us, Oh Lord, to see the world as you see it, carrying a heart of compassion and justice through all we do in your name. Amen.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Read

GOSPEL READING: John 11:1-45

CWS STORY: Surviving the Kunar Earthquake



Ahmad Wali's Story of Loss and Hope.

cwsglobal.org/stories/surviving-the-kunar-earthquake-an-afghan-fathers-story-of-loss-and-hope/

Reflect

The story of Lazarus' resurrection is one of the most powerful moments in Jesus' ministry. It is also one of the most challenging for us as modern people of faith. What does resurrection look like for us on Lazarus Sunday in the year 2026?

Resurrection looks like hope.

In the Scripture reading, Jesus stands before grief and loss - and speaks life into a place that seemed beyond repair. He reminds us, "I am the resurrection and the life," revealing that God's power is not only about what happens after death, but about bringing life and hope into the present moment.

Today, resurrection can look like a blanket warming someone in the cold, a nourishing meal shared with a hungry neighbor, or a grace-filled welcome for families seeking safety. It is the kind of hope described in Ahmad Wali's story from Afghanistan.

After the devastating earthquake in Kunar Province, Ahmad's life and community were shattered - his home destroyed, his livelihood gone, and his family grieving unimaginable loss. In the days that followed, many families were left without food, clean water or shelter. Yet when emergency meals and support arrived, something more than physical hunger was addressed. Ahmad shared that the assistance restored a critical truth: they had not been abandoned.

This is what resurrection can look like in our world - not always dramatic miracles, but moments where hope breaks through despair.

Jesus did not ignore the pain around Lazarus' tomb - he wept alongside those who mourned. In the same way, we are called to enter into the suffering of our neighbors, not with easy answers, but with presence, care and tangible love.

Where do you see places of grief, discouragement or "tomb-like" situations in your community where Christ might be inviting you to bring hope or presence?

What is one small, tangible way you can help share resurrection hope this week - through a meal, a welcome, a conversation or an act of generosity?

Pray

Most-loving God, you weep beside those who weep and call us to do the same. You ask us to enter into their suffering and offer the hope of new life. Help us to see those in need of that hope in our communities and around the world. Amen.

Devotion Author: Andrew Gifford

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

Read

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 21:1-11

CWS STORY: Building Resilience in Haiti



Resilience continues to show brave hearts taking shelter and rebuilding in Haiti.

cwsglobal.org/stories/building-resilience-in-haiti-voices-of-hope-amid-crisis/

Reflect

As Jesus enters Jerusalem, the crowd shouts “Hosanna,” lifting their voices in hope and expectation. Their praise is loud and public, even as the path ahead leads toward suffering and sacrifice. The CWS story from Haiti reflects this same tension.

Communities continue to take shelter, rebuild, and move forward after earthquakes and hurricanes, holding onto hope even when challenges return. Their resilience shows that praise is not only expressed in moments of celebration, but also through courage, persistence, and choosing to stand together. To bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord is to remain present with those whose lives are shaped by both struggle and hope.

When praise feels easy in moments of celebration, what helps you remain faithful and present when the path becomes difficult?

How does the courage of communities rebuilding in Haiti challenge the way you respond to suffering, both your own and others’?

Pray

God of hope and faithfulness, we lift our voices in praise while trusting you in times of uncertainty. Shape our praise into action, so that we stand with those whose lives are marked by struggle, rebuilding, and resilience. We hold before you the communities in Haiti and all who seek safety and restoration after disaster. Lead us to walk with courage, compassion, and steady hope each day. Amen.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Read

GOSPEL READING: John 13:1-15

CWS STORY: It All Begins with Water



How sustainable access sparks community transformation in West Pokot, Kenya.

cwsglobal.org/blog/it-all-begins-with-water-how-sustainable-access-sparks-community-transformation-in-west-pokot/

Reflect

Jesus' act of washing his disciples' feet was not only an expression of humility but a selfless mandate to serve others in tangible, life-affirming ways. In West Pokot, Kenya, CWS partners with communities to provide safe water through the construction of sand dams—simple yet transformative acts that restore health, save time, and uphold human dignity. While Jesus certainly had his share of big and flashy miracles, this is a beautiful example of Christ's love that was common and while seemingly small it remains one of stories we most commonly celebrate from Jesus' ministry. These efforts by CWS and our partners reflect Christ's love by addressing the urgent, everyday struggles of families. When we serve in such ways, we embody the same self-giving love that Jesus demonstrated.

What ways do you presently live out your faith in action? Pause on the ways others have served you in your faith journey. What more can you offer? What thanks can you share?

Pray

Lord Jesus, you knelt to wash your disciples' feet, showing us that true greatness lies in service. Inspire us to follow your example by meeting the needs of the vulnerable with humility and love. Bless the work of those bringing clean water to families in Cambodia and empower us to serve boldly in our own communities. May our hands be yours, reaching out in compassion. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY

Read

GOSPEL READING: John 18:1-19; 42

CWS STORY: From Earthquake to Hurricane Resilience (re-read)



Pain, survival, shelter, and witness in Haiti, even amidst destruction.

cwsglobal.org/stories/from-earthquake-to-hurricane-resilience-in-action-for-communities-in-haiti/

Reflect

Jesus' cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" gives voice to profound suffering, loss, and abandonment. In his anguish, Christ stands in solidarity with all who feel overwhelmed by pain and uncertainty. The cross reminds us that God is not distant from human suffering but fully present within it.

The resilience of communities in Haiti, enduring both earthquake and hurricane, echoes this shared pain and enduring hope. Their survival and witness amid destruction call us to recognize Christ in those who suffer today. When we allow their stories to shape our prayers, our compassion deepens, moving us beyond words toward solidarity, presence, and action rooted in love.

How does recognizing shared pain change the way we pray for those who are suffering?

What does resilience look like in the midst of loss and destruction?

Where do you see Christ's suffering reflected in the experiences of people in Haiti and other vulnerable communities?

How are we called to move from compassion to solidarity and action in response to suffering?

Pray

God who hears every cry, you were present in Christ's suffering and you are present with all who endure pain today. We lift before you the people of Haiti and all who face loss, fear, and uncertainty. Let their resilience strengthen our faith and soften our hearts. Shape our prayers with compassion and move us to stand in solidarity with those who suffer. Even in the depths of suffering, remind us that your love remains. Amen.

EASTER SUNDAY

Read

GOSPEL READING: John 20:1-9

CWS STORY: From Silence to Strength



Andrea Casamento's Global Advocacy — turning personal hardship into advocacy that transforms systems.

cwsglobal.org/stories/from-silence-to-strength-andrea-casamentos-global-advocacy/

Reflect

As we reflect on this Easter Sunday of the resurrection hope we see through Christ's resurrection from the grave the call for us to put this hope into action, working towards good for all God's creation, remains steadfast. The experiences and trials that we face can be disheartening, harmful, and heartbreaking – and yet there is still hope. Andrea in her absolute heartbreak and trails turned that experience of hurt into action that has had a ripple effect and life-changing impact for so many people in Latin American and the Caribbean. Can you imagine if she had not used her hurt for the good of others? The opportunity to step out in boldness for the good of others is what the resurrection power is all about. God brings hope from even the darkest of times. But there is more to that. Christ not only rose from the grave, but he put that into action and through his resurrection provides the opportunity for all God's children to remove the sin we carry. The hardships that Jesus faced before his crucifixion brought a doubt and heaviness that I'm sure felt hopeless. Yet there is hope. "He has risen!" So now, what are we going to do about it?

What examples of using hurt for good do you know of or have personally experienced?

What call to turn struggles into good might be put on your heart as you pray and reflect? Think about what hurt, struggles, or difficulty you have encountered and how that can be used to help others.

Pray

God of endless might and wonder. We thank you for the power of the resurrection and the gift that each of us has the opportunity to live out because of it. Help us to be a people who put faith into action as we go out to be your hands and feet in this world. Help us to be keepers of good for all creation, in all we do. Amen.