

Lenten Devotional

Faith Formation Class

Lenten Celebration

March 6- April 20, 2025



- **Lent** is the season of the Christian Calendar from *Ash Wednesday* to *Easter Sunday*.
- It is a time for growing closer to God, turning away from sin into the arms of our loving Savior.
- Lent is like a retreat. Throughout the year the church is to be directed out to the world, but during the 40 days of Lent we pull back into ourselves for reflection and self-examination.
- Lent is the season when the church (individual members) must face its own unhealthy ways.
- It is a period when we intentionally practice the disciplines of *fasting, prayer, forgiveness, Bible study, solitude, silence*, and practicing *Sabbath* to enhance our intimacy with God.

What Is A Devotional ?

- A Devotional is not designed to change your mind; it's meant to change your hear. A devotional is not:
- A doctrinal treatise
- A Bible commentary;
- A theological textbook.
- The general purpose of a devotional is to encourage spiritual growth.
- A devotional is a written meditation composed by people just like you, people who are paying attention to the movement of God in their life.
- A devotional is a brief (usually 200-400 words) written reflection applying a passage of scripture. It often includes a suggested prayer, hymn, or life application tip.
- In a devotional, we write about how God's care and presence have become real for us, through our prayer and in our interaction with scripture and others.

Why Write a Devotional?



- Our spiritual journeys are strengthened when we pause to reflect on where we have experienced God.
- We often notice God's presence only in retrospect, when we consider how life has unfolded and where the Spirit has taken us.
- Reflecting and writing about these times is an important spiritual discipline.
- Devotional writing is also an act of worship that expresses our reverence and awe. It pays homage to God.
- Communities of faith are strengthened when they share stories of faith. We are inspired and comforted in hearing about the work of God in the life of another.

Before You Write

- Write down the Scripture references that you've been given. Read the Scripture in your own quiet time.
 - Make a list of the things that you've learned from those Scriptures you've read, studied, and meditated on.
 - Make a list of how you want to apply it to your life.
 - Begin writing by organizing what you've learned through your study and the things that have inspired you.
1. What spiritual concept or clarity of a text, Scripture, etc. was revealed to you?
 2. What was said in the text that caused you to seek a deeper understanding of His Word?
 3. How did the text give you a new insight into the nature and work of God?
- *Please note that the above questions are given to guide you in exploration of your thoughts for writing your devotional.

Getting Started



- **Be prayerful** -- Before you put pen to paper, or start typing, **pray**. Ask God to tell you what He would have you to write about. What message does He want you to impart?
- **Pick one topic** -- After intensely praying about what to write, pick one topic that comes to mind and be very focused on that one topic.
- **Keep it short** -- Your devotional should be no more than one page, or **300 words**.
- **Know your audience** -- Write your devotional with Bethlehem's disciples in mind. If it helps, write your devotional as if you're writing it to a dear friend.
- **Check your facts** -- Make sure, if you are quoting biblical scripture that you not only check the scriptures to make sure you are not taking something out of context, and that you are quoting it correctly, but make sure you are using a relevant verse to support your devotional/reflection.
- **Inspire action** -- Ask the readers to do something at the end of your message in your closing paragraph as they experience the Lenten journey. That action will depend on what your message was about. End with a very short prayer, but keep it related to the message.
- **Be yourself** -- Remember to be yourself. You're not perfect -- no human is -- and that is perfectly okay. Grammar isn't as important as your message.

Writing the Devotional/Reflection

- Each of the three parts of a devotional has a special function.
- **The Scripture or concept:** a short passage from the Bible forms the basis for the devotional. It communicates a principle that is reinforced elsewhere in scripture, too.
- **The Illustration:** the body of the devotional that presents an authentic life situation and connects it to the principle. (This is where you would describe your epiphany to the audience.)
- **The Takeaway:** also called the “application,” this element gives the reader a thought to ponder, a prayer to pray, or an action step to take in order to apply the devotional’s scriptural principle.
- **Don’t preach.** Avoid using phrases like, “you should... you need to... you must”.

Date To Submit for Publication

- Please submit your Devotional on April 8, 2024
- Submit to: faisonb@bethlehemofalexandria.org
- 703-360-5472

Questions/
Concerns/
Comments

THANKYOU

