

# Lenten Prayers for Hungry People

Readings, prayers, and actions to help you and your family observe Lent in 2016—prepared by Bread for the World



## First Week in Lent February 14-20

### Jesus Faces Temptation

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Romans 10:8b-13

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.

—*Luke 4:1-2a*

Those who love me, I will deliver;  
I will protect those who know my name.

—*Psalm 91:14*

### PRAYER

O Christ, in your death and resurrection, you have conquered all the forces of evil. During these days of Lent, may we be strengthened by your Spirit, so that we might serve God by helping those who suffer from the evil of hunger. *Amen.*

### ACTION

This is an election year, when many members of Congress and a new president will be elected. Consider how your Lenten observance might include getting involved in the election process and finding out candidates' views on hunger and poverty. For resources to help you, visit [www.bread.org/elections](http://www.bread.org/elections).

**Fold this "table tent" along the lines and insert the tab through the slot.  
Fold backwards for the Fourth and Fifth Weeks of Lent and Holy Week.**

## Second Week in Lent February 21-27

### Jesus is on His Way to Jerusalem

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm 27

Philippians 3:17– 4:1

Luke 13:31-35 or Luke 9:28-43

[Jesus said,] “Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.”

—*Luke 13:32b-33*

The Lord is my light and my salvation;  
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid?

—*Psalm 27:1*



#### PRAYER

O Christ, you willingly set your course to Jerusalem, and you faced death on the cross that we might live. Grant us faith to use this gift of new life to do your work of healing the sick and feeding the hungry.  
*Amen.*

#### ACTION

For one week during Lent, try getting by on just two dollars a day. That's the amount that nearly a third of the world's population struggles to live on every day. An alternative action might be to get a group of members in your church to set aside two dollars each of the 40 days in Lent—a total of \$80 per person—and contribute those funds to your denomination's hunger program or local food bank.

***Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. God's grace in Jesus Christ moves us to reach out to our neighbors whether they live next door, in the next state, or the next continent. Working together, we change the conditions and policies that allow hunger to persist.***

## Third Week in Lent February 28-March 5

### Jesus Offers Mercy and Forgiveness

Isaiah 55:1-9

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Psalms 63:1-8

Luke 13:1-9

So he said to the gardener, "...For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?" [The gardener] replied, "Sir, let it alone for one more year.... If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."

—*Luke 13:7-9*

[O God] Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.

So I will bless you as long as I live;

I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

—*Psalms 63:3-4*

*All scripture readings are from the New Revised Standard Version,  
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in the United States of America. The readings are those appointed by the  
Revised Common Lectionary for each of the Sundays in Lent in Year C.*



#### PRAYER

O God, you call us to repentance and offer us mercy and forgiveness in Christ Jesus. May this gracious gift so fill us with joy that we bear the fruit you desire, working to share the abundance of your creation with all those in need. *Amen.*

#### REFLECTION

Pope Francis has proclaimed 2016 as a Holy Year of Mercy, "a year to be touched by the Lord Jesus and to be transformed by his mercy, so that we may become witnesses to mercy." For Pope Francis, the joy of this gospel of mercy is the joy of the Gospel that inspires and equips us to preserve and restore the dignity of all human beings and to care for all of God's creation.

*Woodcuts were created by  
Helen Siegl, a longtime  
Bread for the World member.*

## Fourth Week in Lent March 6-12

### Jesus Welcomes Sinners

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32



Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

—*Luke 15:1-2*

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,  
whose sin is covered.

—*Psalm 32:1*

**Generous financial support from individuals and churches sustains Bread for the World's work to end hunger. To join Bread for the World and make a financial contribution, visit [www.bread.org/give](http://www.bread.org/give) or call 800-822-7323.**

### PRAYER

O God, we are both the prodigal son and the elder brother. Save us from despair and from pride. Through your love and grace in Christ, turn us around so that we may prepare a feast of hope and opportunity for those who live in hunger. *Amen.*

### ACTION

One in five children in the United States lives in a family that faces the threat of hunger. In 2016, Bread for the World will continue to seek funding and improvements in our nation's child nutrition programs—including making school breakfasts and summer meals available to more children. To make your voice heard, visit [www.bread.org/act](http://www.bread.org/act).



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HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

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## Fifth Week in Lent March 13-19

### Jesus is Anointed for Death

Isaiah 43:16-21

Philippians 3:4b-14

Psalm 126

John 12:1-8

Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

—*John 12:3*

May those who sow in tears  
reap with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,  
shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

—*Psalms 126:5-6*



### PRAYER

O Christ, we give thanks for Mary and all your disciples for their faith and witness to your love and mercy. As we follow you to the Cross during this season of Lent, grant us courage and determination as we urge our elected officials to end hunger and poverty. *Amen.*

### ACTION

More than three-quarters of the world's poorest people depend on farming for their livelihood. Growing crops that can withstand drought and climate change is critical to helping farmers in Africa and elsewhere grow enough food to feed their families. Write or call your members of Congress to encourage them to keep funding our nation's "Feed the Future" initiative. Visit [www.bread.org/act](http://www.bread.org/act).

**Bread for the World welcomes all those who wish to join us as we pray, act, and give to end hunger.**  
To receive a free copy of the pocket-sized *Daily Prayers for an End to Hunger*, visit [www.bread.org/pray](http://www.bread.org/pray) or call 800-822-7323, ext. 1072.

# Holy Week March 20-26

## Jesus Suffers Death

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

Psalms 31:9-16

Luke 22:14-23:56

*These are the scripture readings appointed for Passion Sunday/Palm Sunday.*

This man [Joseph of Arimathea] went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid.”

—*Luke 23:52-53*

But I trust in you, O Lord; ...

My times are in your hand; ...

Let your face shine upon your servant;

save me in your steadfast love.

—*Psalms 31:14a, 15a, 16*

**Additional resources for Lenten reflection and action can be found at [www.bread.org/lent](http://www.bread.org/lent). You may also wish to subscribe to “Bread for the Preacher,” our free online newsletter which follows the Revised Common Lectionary. Visit [www.bread.org/preacher](http://www.bread.org/preacher).**



## PRAYER

O God, your Son gives up his life for us so that we might live in your steadfast love. In Him, the tomb of death becomes the birth place of new life for us and the world you created. May that gift of new life sustain us as we work to save the lives of mothers and children threatened by hunger and disease. *Amen.*

## ACTION

The weeks following Easter are an ideal time to participate in Bread for the World's 2016 Offering of Letters. Each year, individuals, congregations, and campus groups conduct letter-writing events. This year's letter-writing campaign urges Congress to support programs that help mothers and children survive childbirth and thrive. For tips about organizing an Offering of Letters—as well as sample letters and background information—visit [www.bread.org/ol2016](http://www.bread.org/ol2016) or call 800-822-7323, ext. 1072.