



LIVING
in the
SHADOWS

A LENTEN DEVOTIONAL GUIDE





A Prayer for the Journey

God of wilderness and cross,
We confess that we would rather run from the shadows
than face them. We distract ourselves.
We numb ourselves. We pretend we're fine.
But you meet us in the dark. You walked into the wilderness.
You hung on the cross. You descended to the depths.
Give us courage to name what haunts us.
Give us faith to trust that your light is stronger than our shadows.
Give us patience for the forty-day journey,
and companions to walk it with us.
Lead us through the darkness to Easter's dawn.
In the name of the one who is Light from Light,
Amen.



A Lenten Practice for Second

This Lent, we invite you to do something countercultural: **instead of running from the shadows, we're going to face them.**

Each week of our worship series this season explores a different shadow—temptation, fear, worry, idols, despair, and the cross itself. Each week, we'll provide a simple reflection question to help you sit with that shadow in your own life.

We're also inviting you to consider a Lenten fast—not from food, but from something that casts a shadow in your life. **Ask yourself: What am I consuming that's keeping me from the light? Then, for these forty days, let it go.**

This isn't about perfection. It's about attention. The shadows lose power when we stop avoiding them and start naming them. That's the journey to the cross—and the path to resurrection.

Three Practices

Practice One: Shadow Inventory

Each week, sit with one question. You might journal, pray, or simply hold the question during a quiet moment. Let it do its work.

Practice Two: Shadow Fast

Choose one thing to fast from for the forty days of Lent—something that feeds your fear, worry, distraction, or false comfort. Name it. Release it. Notice what emerges in the space it leaves behind.

Practice Three: From Shadow to Light

We invite you to face your shadows by stepping into action. How can we move from the shadows of hunger, injustice, and fear and move toward the light? Each week during Lent, we invite you, your family, or small group to set a practice for serving our neighbors.

How to Use This Guide

1. Keep this guide available for the next 40 days.
2. Each Sunday, read the reflection and sit with the question. You might journal, pray, or simply carry the question through the week.
3. Choose your fast before Lent begins (or during the first week). Tell someone. Ask them to check in with you.
4. Be gentle with yourself. This isn't about perfection. It's about attention. When you fail, begin again.
5. Notice what emerges. The shadows lose power when we name them. Pay attention to what God reveals.

Shadow Fast Options

Choose one for the 40 days of Lent.

Social Media

The comparison machine, the outrage engine, the endless scroll. What if you stepped away and let the silence speak?

News Cycle

Stay informed but consider fasting from the constant drip of anxiety. Silence the alerts. Check once a day. Notice what happens to your fear and worry.

Shopping/Browsing

The habit of filling emptiness with stuff. For forty days, buy only what you need. Sit with the want instead of satisfying it.

Streaming/Screens

Not all of it, perhaps, but the numbing kind. The show you watch to avoid your thoughts. What's underneath the distraction?

Complaining/Cynicism

A fast of the tongue. For forty days, resist the urge to criticize, mock, or despair out loud. See what it does to your heart.

Something Else

You know what feeds your shadows. Name it. Let it go.



The shadows lose power when we
stop avoiding them and start naming them.

Weekly Guide

Week 1 – The Shadow of Temptation

February 22, 2026 Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11 | Deuteronomy 8:1-6

Shadow Inventory Question: Where am I tempted to rely on my own power instead of trusting God's presence?

Reflection: Jesus faces the tempter in the wilderness—hungry, alone, vulnerable. The temptations aren't crude; they're sophisticated. Turn stones to bread. Prove yourself. Take the shortcut to power. Each one invites Jesus to act out of scarcity rather than trust. Where do you feel that pull?

CHOOSE A LENT PRACTICE OF GIVING BACK

Consider donating food to the
Don & Karen Lake Buttrey Northside Food Pantry.

Weekly Guide

Week 2—The Shadow of Fear

March 1, 2026 Scripture: Matthew 8:23-34 | Isaiah 43:1-2

Shadow Inventory Question: What am I most afraid of right now?
What does that fear make me do?

Reflection: Fear is a storm that swamps the boat. It wakes us in the night. It makes us see enemies everywhere. Jesus sleeps through the storm—not because he doesn't care, but because he knows who's in charge. What storm is raging in you? And what would it mean to hear him say, "Why are you afraid?"

CHOOSE A LENT PRACTICE OF GIVING BACK

Consider donating an apartment kit for Streets to Home Indy.
Learn more at IndyMultifaith.org/moveinkits

Weekly Guide

Week 3—The Shadow of Worry

March 8, 2026 Scripture: Luke 12:22-31 | Exodus 16:11-18

Shadow Inventory Question: What am I worrying about that I haven't surrendered to God?

Reflection: Worry is fear stretched out over time. It occupies the mind, crowds out peace, and whispers that there won't be enough. Jesus points to birds, to lilies—creatures that don't hoard or strategize, yet are provided for. The manna in the wilderness couldn't be stored. It had to be trusted, daily.

What would it mean to stop hoarding and start trusting?

CHOOSE A LENT PRACTICE OF GIVING BACK

Consider volunteering to work a shift at the Northside Food Pantry. Sign up at SecondChurch.org/FoodPantry

Weekly Guide

Week 4—The Shadow of Idols

March 15, 2026 Scripture: Exodus 32:1-14 | Matthew 6:22-24

Shadow Inventory Question: What has become an idol for me—something I'm serving instead of God?

Reflection: John Calvin called the human mind a "permanent factory of idols." We can't help it—we make gods out of everything. Security. Success. Control. Comfort. Political saviors. The golden calf wasn't a rejection of God; it was impatience with God. What are you worshiping while you wait?

CHOOSE A LENT PRACTICE OF GIVING BACK

Consider volunteering to work a shift at Second Treasures.
Sign up at SecondChurch.org/SecondTreasures

Weekly Guide

Week 5—The Shadow of Despair

March 22, 2026 Scripture: Psalm 130:1-7 | Mark 15:25-34

Shadow Inventory Question: Where am I close to despair? What would it mean to cry out to God from that place?

Reflection: "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord." The Psalms give us permission to be honest—to name the darkness without pretending it away. Even Jesus cried out, "Why have you forsaken me?" Despair is not the absence of faith. Sometimes it's the only honest place to begin. What would you say to God if you stopped editing yourself?

CHOOSE A LENT PRACTICE OF GIVING BACK

Consider volunteering to work a shift at the Northside Food Pantry. Sign up at SecondChurch.org/FoodPantry

Weekly Guide

Week 6—The Shadow of the Cross

March 29, 2026 (Palm Sunday) Scripture: Mark 11:1-11 | Mark 8:27-38

Shadow Inventory Question: What cross am I avoiding? What would it mean to stop running?

Reflection: Palm Sunday is a day of triumph—but the shadow of the cross already falls across the road. Jesus doesn't turn back. He doesn't take the shortcut. He walks straight into the darkness, trusting that the Father's love is stronger than death. What are you avoiding that you know you must face?

CHOOSE A LENT PRACTICE OF GIVING BACK

What is your passion? How can you shine your light?
Name it and act on it.



HOLY WEEK *Services*

APRIL 2

Maundy Thursday

Service of Tenebrae & Communion

8 PM • Sanctuary

APRIL 3

Good Friday

Meditations on the Seven Last Words of Christ

12-3 PM • Sanctuary

APRIL 5

Easter Sunday

Easter Sunrise

7:15 AM • Labyrinth

(McFarland Hall in case of rain)

9 & 11 AM • Sanctuary

The Light Will Find You

Luke 24:1-12



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