

PRAYER BENCH

LENT RETREAT 2024

SACRED SEEING

WELCOME TO

a journey through Lent on a path of sacred seeing. We'll explore practices to deepen our experience of the Divine.

We'll get ideas from the mystic's gaze, the eyes of the poets, and the vision of the prophets.

Through the reflections, practices, quotes, and evocative questions you'll have opportunity to strengthen your inner vision and deepen your experience of the Divine within, among us, and in our world.

During the six weeks of Lent, you may want to pick up this Retreat once a day or once a week. You may have 5 minutes to spend or 50 minutes.

You might follow the prompts in order or let your heart randomly choose one. They can be used in any order. You might finish them all in six weeks or may choose to stay with a few and save others for another time. Follow your heart.

Everything you need is in this retreat guide. However, if you have time and inclination, I have opened a private webpage for Lent retreat followers, and you will find additional resources which you might find interesting.

Click (if you are reading this on a device) or type the following into a web browser and you will be brought to the page and asked to enter the password. Here is the information you need.

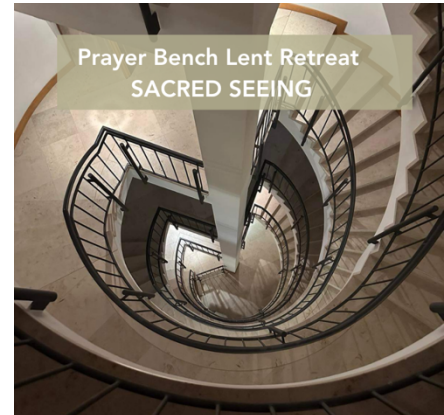
Lent Page:

Password:

If you have personal photos or poems, stories or reflections you want to share with others making this retreat, you can email me at Janice@prayerbench.ca and I will post them.

We are on the journey together. May these days of Lent be filled with wonder, energy, and renewed learning. May our desire to see with the eyes of our heart deepen our wisdom and love of God.

Janice MacLean, Host of the Prayer Bench.



REFLECTIONS, PROMPTS & IDEAS FOR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Dear Retreat Friends, what follows on these pages are my reflections, a few favourite quotes, and ideas for creative expression and spiritual practice.

Do you remember stories of folk who used branches or rods to locate ground water? Your heart can be a divining rod for you. Glance at a prompt and take a breath and you'll know if you want to go deeper with it.

Don't feel you need to explore every prompt. The little word and icon at the beginning will identify the kind of prompt so you'll know at a glance the nature of what follows, and your heart will know if it is for you.

When you have chosen a prompt or it has chosen you, read it slowly. Mull it over. Imagine it falling into your heart. Be open to pondering and playing with the prompt. There is no right or wrong learning to take from it. Wonder what it means for you today. Ask how the prompt helps to support your desire to deepen your Sacred Seeing.

Use the prompts to create space in your day and heart so you can fall in love with the Divine over and over. You may return to a prompt more than once during the season. See how it changes as you go along the journey.

The prompt may inspire you to write or doodle, pray or walk; it may remind you of a book or lead you to scripture story or to a conversation with a friend. Go where the journey leads you.



A REFLECTION



A QUOTE FOR MEDITATION



A PRACTICE OR ACTIVITY



A LENT SCRIPTURE STORY



A PRAYER



A JOURNAL PROMPT OR CREATIVE SUGGESTION



A CHANT OR SONG

GETTING READY

IDEAS FOR CREATING LENT SPACE

Creating a special space helps give form to our Lent intention for making time to nurture our journey and relationship with the Holy One.

You may wish to create Lent **sacred space or altar-table** for your retreat. Do you have a quiet space? a corner? a rocking chair? a window with a view? that is just for you and where you can come to retreat.

Perhaps you have a favourite shawl, or coloured fabric for your space. The traditional colour of Lent is purple or perhaps you have a **colour** that is just for you this Lent?

You might want to have a **candle** to light -- or six candles, one for each week in Lent. Perhaps you have a special object or **symbol** you want in your space. As you explore Sacred Seeing during the weeks of Lent, you may “see” other objects or symbols to add to your Lent space.

Maybe you would like to have a **Prayer Bowl**, any bowl you love will work. And find 40 stones or buttons or paper clips or small, lovely pieces of paper and add a prayer to your bowl each day in Lent. (The 40 days of Lent don’t include Sundays as they are considered “Little Easters.”) Your bowl, like the Heart of God holds the prayers of your heart.

Alternatively, you can make a **spiral** with a piece of string or print a labyrinth. (See the group Lent webpage for a pattern.) It is your Lent path. You can place one of your 40 objects as a prayer to mark your journey.

You may wish to have **creative supplies** at hand: a notebook for journaling, a sketch book and crayons or markers for doodling, an instrument for making music. You’ll know what you need.

A retreat offers space and time to remember what nourishes us and helps us come close to the Holy. A retreat also offers opportunity for trying a new practice or activity we think we can’t do. We learn much from what we resist.

These are ideas. I hope you enjoy creating a space that supports your intentions for Lent and that it becomes an outward space of your inner seeing.

Now on to the Retreat prompts for prayer, study and reflection!

Thanks for reading this sample. I hope the first three pages allows you to see the shape of the Retreat. It is available in Prayer Bench Shop for Individuals (\$15) or for groups under license (\$40). I welcome your email if you have questions. – Janice, Host of the Prayer Bench.