



# A Good Enough Lent

A 40-Day Companion to  
Read, Reflect, and Pray

## WHAT IS LENT?

Lent marks the forty days leading up to Easter, mirroring the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. It is a practice that began during the 4th century as a way to prepare Christians for the holiest days of the year.

During Lent, we ask God to show us the world as it is. We begin with the reality of our finitude rubbed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday—from dust we were made, to dust we shall return. Then, we walk through that reality in a kind of dress rehearsal. It's the downward slope of God—the Great Descent, where the whole Church walks toward the cross.

Frankly, Lent is my favorite part of the church calendar because it is a time when the whole church is on the losing team. A time when we all get a minute to tell the truth: Life is so beautiful and life is so hard. For everyone.

Of course, the cross isn't the end of the story, but this season of grief is carved out to acknowledge the reality of Christ's sacrifice. And the reality of suffering that so many of our circumstances reflect too—our own pain and grief and despair. Easter is coming, yes. But for now, we sit in the ashes of our broken dreams and broken hearts, knowing that God sits here with us.

Many people practice Lent by giving something up—alcohol, meat, chocolate, social media. Some take up something new—a new prayer practice or swearing profusely like I did one year (you probably remember reading about this in *Everything Happens for a Reason (and Other Lies I've Loved)*).

This year, I'm inviting our Everything Happens Community to give up on the idea that life is always getting better and settle in for a life and a faith that is good enough. Together, we're going to take ourselves off the hook for perfection. Perfect lives. Perfect bodies. Perfect relationships. And realize that this is the beautiful work of being human... again today. Thank God we get to do it together.

So what do you say? Do you want to commit to a "Good Enough" Lent?



Kate

# HOW TO USE THIS COMPANION GUIDE

Each of the following forty entries is meant to be read alongside our new book of spiritual reflections, *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*. Of course, you can just use this free guide or just read *Good Enough* on its own, but you might find the most richness and depth when used together.

## EACH DAY INCLUDES:

- An entry to read from *Good Enough*
- A scripture to read and reflect on, based on that day's theme
- Little checkboxes to indicate what you've read ☐
- Reflection questions that are meant to be all-play—accessible whether you are practicing Lent solo or using this book with your church, in a book club, or around the dinner table with your family.
- A prayer to close your time
- Feel free to print this booklet out and write your answers on these pages, in a journal, or simply meditate on your responses.

## A NOTE ON SUNDAYS

Lent lasts for a full 40 days, but Sundays don't count. They are a day off from whatever you are abstaining from during Lent, a day to remind us that we are made for both—grief and joy, sorrow and delight. Strangely, this might feel like a hard thing to do—to make yourself stop working or worrying or checking off your day's reading—and really rest.

But over the next six weeks, you're invited to press against that part of your wiring that tells you that you must always be accomplishing, producing, processing—that everything must be *for* something. And take a day off from the Lent-y feelings to practice the discipline of Sabbath. Rest! Feast! Enjoy!

Before we begin, we wholeheartedly believe in blessing the crap out of each other. So here is a blessing for you, my dear.

## A BLESSING FOR A MEDIUM-SAD JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

Blessed are you  
who have found yourself—yet again—  
among the fellowship of the afflicted.  
Making the long, long walk toward the cross.

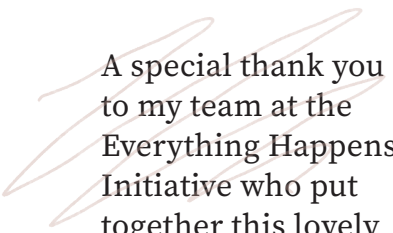
Blessed are you,  
who are tired of pretending  
that raw effort is the secret to perfection.  
That that which breaks your heart  
is overcomeable.  
It's not. And you know that now.

Blessed are you  
who need a gentle reminder that  
even now, even today,  
God is here,  
walking with us,  
meeting us in our places  
of sorrow and despair,  
desperation and grief.  
Slowing lifting our chin toward hope.  
Not promising to erase the pain.  
But to carry it with us.

Blessed are we who realize  
we are never—were never—alone.  
And somehow,  
That is good enough.



To learn more about the work of the Everything Happens Initiative, listen to podcast episodes, or download additional resources, visit [katebowler.com](https://katebowler.com).



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# Building a Good Day

MONDAY, MARCH 7

☐ *Good Enough*, 28-33   ☐ Psalm 37:1-9

01

Imagine that you have a completely free day. No clutter, no pressure. *I know, that's hard to picture.* But just rest in that thought for a moment and breathe.

02

Now imagine that you could choose to do what is truly life-giving, joyful, and meaningful, including something that brings you closer to God, if you'd like. You in particular, not anyone else. What might those things be? What memories, thoughts, hopes, or awarenesses are surfacing, about what makes you feel most spiritually alive?

03

How might you make these life-giving things more a part of your everyday life and less of a someday or when-I-get-less-busy?

Dear God, thank you for the inbreath of hope that my life could become a richer and truer expression, an outbreath of Your Spirit in me, and through me. Help me build this beauty, this goodness into my life, one gentle day at a time.

*Amen.*

# Small Things, Great Love

**TUESDAY, MARCH 8**

☐ *Good Enough*, 34 - 38   ☐ Galatians 5:6

01

Like Little Thérèse or Kate's beloved music teacher Adeline Muller, who comes to mind when you think of quiet faithfulness?

02

Love isn't just in the grand gestures, it is—perhaps even more so—the small moments. What small act of great love is yours to do in this season of life? How will you act on it today?

Dear God of Love,

I know I was created by You, in love, for love. As Little Thérèse says, "love proves itself by its deeds." There are great things I long to do, loving things, yet there are limitations in this ordinary life that I live. Reveal to me the little way that is possible and sustainable, so I can show up faithfully, doing small things with great love and delight.

*Amen.*

# Asleep on the Job

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

☐ *Good Enough*, 39-44 ☐ Luke 7:1-10

01

Today, do you resonate more with the centurion who trusted Jesus' authority over life and death, even from afar? Or are you feeling more like the disciples with Him in the storm-tossed boat, asking Jesus if He has noticed that they are all about to drown?

02

"Jesus is the one who dies and who is resurrected. And the one whose presence remains but whose absence is always before us in this broken world" (*Good Enough*, 41). Near or far, in the calm or in the storm, in faith or in doubt, tell God about life as it is for you. Let it flow.

03

Notice in the past where love has entered into even the most difficult of days. How does love speak into your faith, and transform it?

God, I don't have answers to the chaos or the pain. But I do know what love feels like. You invented it, and I feel its depth, urgency, pre-eminence and power, even in the midst of fear and doubt. God, help me trust that You are as close as the air. And that with You, I am truly seen, known, and loved.

*Amen.*



# When Good Things Become Burdens

THURSDAY, MARCH 10

☐ *Good Enough*, 45-50    ☐ Matthew 11:28-30

01

Let's check in again with the idea of a regular practice, and the continuum that can exist between these two extremes.



Don't make me do the same thing everyday.

I thrive off regularity/routine.

Where would you place yourself now on this spectrum? Can you sense that a slight shift in either direction would be more life-giving for you?

02

Perfection in the abstract is unattainable and chafes against the call of Jesus to take on the kind yoke that is gentle and humble of heart, one that fits our own particular nature, means, and circumstances. Consider: What practices feel harsh and burdensome? Which ones awaken in you a greater inner vitality and freedom of spirit that gives life and meaning?

03

How might these life-giving practices become more part of a regular rhythm that is gently possible in this season of your life?

Dear God, You know me, and You know those things I do that dampen Your life in me. Grant me freedom to come out from under what is not mine to carry. Let me sit awhile in Your presence, and begin to sense how You are shaping for me a pattern of life that builds strength and peace. And may it be for me such an inner joy, that it might overflow to others.

*Amen.*

# The Foundation

FRIDAY, MARCH 11

☐ *Good Enough*, 51-55   ☐ Romans 12:4-5

01

"We are standing on a foundation. It should come as an incredible relief. Our only job is to build on what we've been given, and, even then, our gifts we can trace back to the creativity, generosity, and foresight of others. Thank God we are a group project" (*Good Enough*, 53). What are the gifts, skills, characteristics, passions, and interests that make you who you are?

02

Whose help, instruction, or influence has been especially foundational for you?

03

Are there threads of connection where you see that your gifts are building into the lives of others?

Dear God, thank you for reminding me that I am not a solo act. I am a group project. Strengthen in me the gifts that are mine to give and give me the eyes to see the foundation set by others in me.

*Amen.*

# When You Are Exhausted

**SATURDAY, MARCH 12**

☐ *Good Enough*, 56-60   ☐ Psalm 62:5-8, 11

01

There is a strange logic about exhaustion. It seems that the more tired we are, the harder it is to slow down. But, like it or not, sometimes our body or attitude give us clues we are nearing burnout. We are short-tempered or brittle or lack the creativity we usually have. We get sick easily or lack the joy that normally comes with hobbies or friends. What are the signals or symptoms that indicate that you need to take a break?

02

Rest sounds lovely—except when the whole world rests on our shoulders, and we can't easily slow down, let alone stop. Take a second to remember: "Not everything has to be done. And not everything has to be done by you" (*Good Enough*, 58). What permission does that offer you today?

03

Rest does not have to mean taking a nap in the middle of the day (because really... who can do that?!). It can be anything that fills up your tank for love, creativity, and generosity. Calling an old friend. Gardening. Organizing the junk drawer. Going to bed 15 minutes earlier. Reading a book and not expecting to learn anything. What does rest look like for you? How will you integrate that into this week?

God, I am nearing burnout. The things that once were life-giving now feel depleting. I'm resentful and irritable and don't like who I am very much. Come and fill my heart with Your peace. I am desperate for your life-giving, spirit-filling rest. You hold the world, not me. And thank God for that.

*Amen.*



**Blessed are we who  
discover we are  
loved and held in  
arms that are strong  
enough to hold that  
which we cannot.**

*Good Enough, p. 59*