

# Lenten Devotions Created for Community In Community With All the Saints

-Rev. John Kotovsky, Lutheran Senior Services



I am blessed to be the Chief Mission Officer at Lutheran Senior Services, [www.LSSLiving.org](http://www.LSSLiving.org). In 2020, we celebrated our 162<sup>nd</sup> anniversary. We have 21 Senior Living Communities in Missouri and Illinois. Our Christian Mission is "Older Adults Living Life to the Fullest" taken from John 10:10. One of the things that we pride ourselves on, is that our communities are not just a place to live, but they become "home" for the older saints that we serve as they experience community and live life to the fullest. Residents and staff become family to one another.

The pandemic of 2020 has been very difficult on the older adults we serve because older adults are among the most vulnerable to COVID-19. Our servant hearted staff have worked endless hours to keep our residents and one another safe during the pandemic. They are our **Long-Term Care Heroes!**

In order to protect our older adults from the spread of this disease all our communities went to sheltering in place for many months. This has taken a toll on our older adults and their families. Daughters, sons, grandchildren, other family, and friends could not visit their loved ones.



We needed to be creative and discover new ways to connect. Many of our older adults discovered technology as a friend for the first time. We purchased iPads so that our residents could do Facetime and Zoom with family and friends. We created virtual events for family and friends. We streamed all of our worship services and Bible Studies. Our Chaplains personally delivered Holy Communion to our residents in their rooms. We organized drive-by parades of decorated cars and trucks so loved ones could greet our older adults and feel connected again. We built hugging walls of clear plastic sheets so loved ones could hug one another without risking the spread of COVID-19. Through all of this we gained a new appreciation for the little things in life and for each other that brought our communities even closer together.

Our God is a God of relationships. God wanted to deliver God's message of love for all of us in a personal way by sending his son Jesus into our world. God wants to be in conversation and community with us because we bear God's designer label through baptism and we are God's children, sisters and brothers of Jesus. We were created to be in a relationship with God and live in community with one another.



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There is also a connection across time. We are all connected to the saints that have gone before us. They are our ancestors in faith. We have received a spiritual inheritance from them. Our responsibility is then to share Jesus with those that are around us and come after us. So that we can pass on the spiritual inheritance that we have received to the next generation.

**Mark 9:2-8**

<sup>2</sup> Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed, <sup>3</sup> and his clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them. <sup>4</sup> Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> Peter exclaimed, "Rabbi, it's wonderful for us to be here! Let's make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." <sup>6</sup> He said this because he didn't really know what else to say, for they were all terrified.

<sup>7</sup> Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my dearly loved Son. Listen to him." <sup>8</sup> Suddenly, when they looked around, Moses and Elijah were gone, and only Jesus was with them.

In the story of the Transfiguration from the Gospel of Mark, Jesus encounters the great patriarchs of faith in Elijah and Moses with his disciples Peter, James, and John as witnesses. It reminds us that Jesus is connected to them as brothers just as he is connected to us as his brothers and sisters. Jesus respects Elijah and Moses for their role in the story of salvation and he is in conversation with them. Peter, James, and John witness this relationship and will retell the story so that it is passed on to all the generations that follow.

Are you in conversations with God? Are you listening to Jesus? How are you passing along your spiritual inheritance? Have you told the stories of faith to your children and grandchildren? Are you staying connected with your loved ones that are in Senior Living Communities or are homebound? Are you telling others about God's unconditional love for them?

*Timeless One,  
you renew your promises in every generation. Deepen our awareness of the  
communion of saints who have gone before us, the saints in our own time, and  
the saints who will carry on your message of grace after us. In Jesus' name we  
pray.*

**Amen.**