

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

Fourth Week of Advent

December 22, 2024, through December 29, 2024

Life Thoughts-- Jesus brought God delicately amidst sinners, as humble in crucifixion as He was helpless in conception. Yet this estate did not hinder but, in fact, heralded the full realm and reign of God for us. And thereby He reaffirmed the worth of even the feeblest human beings. God's gift of life arrives all the better for the plain packaging He habitually hides it behind. *Prayer: Lamb of God, make it so that our taking hold of You leads us to cradle Your little ones as well. Amen.*

Stewardship Thoughts-- **John 1:12** – “**But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.**” In the beginning we were made in God's image. When Adam and Eve sinned, the image was tarnished, and in some ways, it was even lost. But Christ has come to restore us, to make us God's children again, to restore the image of God within us. The Christian life is a life of growing into that image, of struggling against sin and striving to imitate our Lord in His mercy, generosity, love, faithfulness and kindness.

Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate. Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

Verse: John 1:1, 14

“In the beginning was the word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Read or Chant Psalm 98

Which are these?

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?

Day	Bible Stories for Daily Devotions	Second Reading
Sun., Dec. 22	OT Lesson, 4th Sunday in Advent—Deuteronomy 18:15-19	Luke 1:39-56
Mon., Dec. 23	Behold, the Lord God comes with might.—Isaiah 40:9-11	Matthew 1:18-20
Tues., Dec. 24	The people who walked in darkness—Isaiah 9:2-7	Luke 2:1-14
Wed, Dec. 25	But you, O Bethlehem—Micah 5:2-5a	Luke 2:15-20
Thurs, Dec. 26	The Spirit of God clothed Zechariah—2 Chronicles 24:17-22	Acts 6:9-7:2a, 51-60
Fri., Dec. 27	The Revelation of Jesus Christ—Revelation 1:1-6	1 John 1:1-2:2
Sat., Dec. 28	A voice is heard in Ramah—Jeremiah 31:15-17	Matthew 2:13-18
Sun., Dec. 29	OT Lesson, 1 st Sunday of Christmas—Deuteronomy 18:15-19	Galatians 4:1-7

Pray the Collect for Christmas Dawn:

Most merciful God, You gave Your eternal Word to become incarnate of the pure Virgin. Grant Your people grace to put away fleshly lusts, that they may be ready for Your visitation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Personal Prayers and Petitions

Lord's Prayer

Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Luther's Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Hymn of the Week

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

LSB 359

1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As prophets long have sung,
It came, a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

2 Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
She bore to us a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.

3 This flow'r, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us
And lightens ev'ry load.

4 O Savior, child of Mary,
Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory,
Who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length we pray
To the bright courts of heaven,
And to the endless day.

Text (sts. 1–2): tr. Theodore Baker, 1851–1934, alt.; (sts. 1–2, 4): German, 16th cent.; (st. 3): Friedrich L. C. Layriz, 1808–59; (st. 3): tr. Harriet R. K. Spaeth, 1845–1925; (st. 4): tr. John C. Mattes, 1876–1948
Text: Public domain

Looking forward to the First Sunday of Christmas

December 29, 2024

HYMNS: 374, 389, 367, 392

Isaiah 11:1-5

Galatians 4:1-7

Luke 2:22-40