



A Guide for your Christian Life between Sundays

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 18 through December 24, 2022*

Joseph believes that he has been betrayed by Mary, but instead of reacting in anger, which was his right, he decided to show her mercy by divorcing her quietly. An angel then comes and tells him that Mary has not been unfaithful to him at all, but is carrying the Messiah, and that he should still marry her. He obediently does this, and Mary gives birth to Jesus, who, like Joseph, will not take sin lightly, but will also show mercy to mankind. This is all a reflection of God the Father, who by His law condemns sin, but by the Gospel saves all who will believe.

AN ORDER FOR DAILY MEDITATION AND PRAYER

Read the Scriptures appointed for the day, review the readings from Sunday, and learn by heart the appointed verse and portion of the Small Catechism. Conclude with the Psalms, the Collect, and the prayers, using the guidelines as you see appropriate.

DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, Dec. 18	Psalm 119:81-88	Is. 34:1-2, 8— 35:10	Rev. 6:1-17
Monday, Dec. 19	Psalm 103:11-18	Is. 40:1-17	Rev. 7:1-17
Tuesday, Dec. 20	Psalm 119:25-32	Is. 40:18—41:10	Rev. 8:1-13
Wednesday, Dec. 21	Psalm 102:24-28	Is. 42:1-25	Rev. 9:1-12
Thursday, Dec. 22	Psalm 115:1-8, 11	Is. 43:1-24	Rev. 9:13—10:11
Friday, Dec. 23	Psalm 39:4-8	Is 43:25—44:20	Rev. 11:1-19
Saturday, Dec. 24	Psalm 98:1-6, 9	Is. 44:21—45:13, 20-25	Rev.12:1-17

A LOOK BACK TO THE LITURGY – DECEMBER 18, 2022

Theme: Joseph is an image of God the Father, and Christ is the perfect image and likeness of God the Father.

Hymn: 362, “O Sing of Christ”

Summary of Readings:

Isaiah 7:10-17: The Lord promises a sign to unbelieving Ahaz that *the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

Romans 1:1-7: The living and active Word prophesied by the prophets and delivered by the Apostles brings forth the *obedience of faith*, that is, the obedience which *consists* of faith by which we belong to Jesus Christ.

Matthew 1:18-25: The Word of God spoken by the angelic messenger creates the very faith by which Mary, Joseph, and all who hear His Word receive the gift of Immanuel, God with us.

MEMORY VERSE TO LEARN BY HEART:

Romans 3:28: “Man is justified by faith, apart from the deeds of the law.”

THE CATECHISM: THE LORD’S PRAYER: SIXTH PETITION

(Important! If you have memorized a different translation in confirmation, it is best to pull out your old catechism and refresh your memory from those texts.)

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean? God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory..

PSALM OF THE WEEK: PSALM 24 (ESV)

Meditate on this Psalm every day when you pray, and use it as the starting place for your own prayer:

¹The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, ²for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. ³Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? ⁴He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. ⁵He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. ⁶Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. ⁷Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. ⁸Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! ⁹Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. ¹⁰Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!

LUTHER’S INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 24¹:

The 24th psalm is a prophecy of the coming worldwide kingdom of Christ. It calls on the “doors” of the world, that is, the kings and princes, to make way for the kingdom of Christ. They and those who for the most part rage against Him (Ps 2) ask, “Who is this King of glory” as if they were to say, “This beggar! Yes, this heretic! This criminal! Shall he be a king and shall we yield and submit to him? We shall not!” In this way the psalm shows that God’s Word will certainly be condemned and persecuted. This psalm belongs in the 1st Commandment and in both the 3rd Commandment and the Third Petition.

COLLECT FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT:

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

¹ Reading the Psalms with Luther, CPH, 2007

DAILY THEMES FOR PRAYER – (From LSB page 294)

Sunday: Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.

Monday: Pray for faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.

Tuesday: Pray for deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.

Wednesday: Pray for marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.

Thursday: Pray for the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deacons, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood.

Friday: Pray for the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.

Saturday: Pray for faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.

IN OUR PRAYERS AT CHRIST:

Prayer Family: *Christopher Martin* and his loved ones

Landry Bagley, the Weidners' grandchild, who has graduated

The Family of Louise Harris, Joan Cowards's cousin, who has entered eternal rest

Larry Taylor, Natalie Rudsenske's grandfather, who is ill

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LUTHER'S MORNING OR EVENING 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.