



A Guide for your Christian Life between Sundays

*The First Sunday in Advent
December 3 through December 9, 2023*

As we await the First Coming of Christ on Christmas Day, our Lord teaches us about His Second Coming on the Last Day. He instructs us that we cannot know when this day will come, but rather, He both encourages us and warns us to ever be prepared, as were the five virgins keeping watch for Him, knowing that He might come at any moment. We must never become complacent and drift into sinful faithlessness, but always guard our hearts, knowing the Lord is never more than a moment away.

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

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|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Sunday, Dec. 3 | Psalm 55:16-23 | Is. 9:8—10:11 | 1 Peter 5:1-14 |
| Monday, Dec. 4 | Psalm 145:1-9 | Is. 10:12-27, 33-34 | 2 Peter 1:1-21 |
| Tuesday, Dec. 5 | Psalm 49:5-12, 15 | Is. 11:1—12:6 | 2 Peter 2:1-22 |
| Wednesday, Dec. 6 | Psalm 56:1-2, 5-11, 13 | Is. 14:1-23 | 2 Peter 3:1-18 |
| Thursday, Dec. 7 | Psalm 25:1-7 | Is. 24:1-13 | 1 John 1:1—2:14 |
| Friday, Dec. 8 | Psalm 11 | Is. 24:14—25:12 | 1 John 2:15-29 |
| Saturday, Dec. 9 | Psalm 17:6-15 | Is. 26:1-19 | 1 John 3:1-24 |

A LOOK BACK TO THE LITURGY – DECEMBER 3, 2023

Theme: The Lord is indeed coming again in glory to judge both the living and the dead. Let us therefore never let our faith grow weak, but keep it steadfast until His coming.

Hymn: 355, “O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide”

Summary of Readings:

Isaiah 64:1-9: Isaiah first calls on God to come down in judgment to pour out His wrath on the nations. However, confessing that we *have all become like one who is unclean*, He prays for God’s mercy, reminding Him that we are His people and begging Him to *remember not iniquity forever*.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9: God, who is gracious and merciful, demonstrated His grace by giving us His Son who sustains us to the end by His gifts, guiltless in the day when He comes again.

Mark 13:24-37: Christ speaks of His coming in judgment on the Last Day, that it will be a dreadful sight; but to those who are vigilant and keep the faith, it will be the fulfillment of all that He has promised us. Therefore, we are to stay awake, and await His coming with repentant joy.

MEMORY VERSE TO LEARN BY HEART:

Romans 5:8: “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

THE CATECHISM: CONFESSION (PART II)

(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.)

What sins should we confess? Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

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?

PSALM OF THE WEEK: PSALM 80:1-7 (ESV)

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

¹Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth. ²Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up your might and come to save us! ³Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved! ⁴O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers? ⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure. ⁶You make us an object of contention for our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves. ⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved!

LUTHER'S PRAYER ON PSALM 80¹:

Blessed be Your holy name, O Lord God of heaven, because You have planted in our land that noble vine, the Christian Church. Cause it to grow and to spread forth its branches, that it may overshadow the land and bring forth prolific fruit for the good of our nation, and the salvation of many, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT:

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; 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: *Chuck & Margaret Haynes* and their loved ones

Anita Martin, who has completed her last week of radiation treatment for cancer

Mrs. Bob Ponds, the Pedersens' neighbor, who was taken to the hospital

Nikki Vines, Michelle Miller's sister, who is very 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.