



A Guide for your Christian Life between Sundays

*The First Sunday after Christmas
December 29, 2024 through January 4, 2024*

The Lord commanded his people of old to sacrifice ‘all who open the womb’ unto him, both of livestock and of men. It is a disturbing thought, but it would seem that God commands human sacrifice. Yet immediately after commanding such a sacrifice, he grants that a substitute shall be given in the place of the child, a lamb, just as a ram was given in place of Isaac. Yet a substitute does not do away with the original command, it merely gives a way out. The fact is, the Father still desires the sacrifice of a son of man, whole and undefiled. And that sacrifice shall be His Son. To some this thought is hateful. To some, beautiful. To most, confusing. Yet this very idea reveals in us our deepest hopes and fears, even as St. Simeon prophesies to us.

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. 29	Psalm 78:1-7	Is. 55:1-13	Luke 1:1-25
Monday, Dec. 30	Psalm 89:1-4, 14-18	Is. 58:1—59:3, 14-21	Luke 1:26-38
Tuesday, Dec. 31	Psalm 111:1-6, 10	Is. 60:1-22	Luke 1:39-56
Wednesday, Jan. 1	Psalm 113	Is. 61:1-11	Luke 1:57-80
Thursday, Jan. 2	Psalm 62:5-8, 11-12	Is. 62:1-12	Luke 2:1-20
Friday, Jan 3	Psalm 108:1-6, 12-13	Is. 63:1-14	Luke 2:21-40
Saturday, Jan. 4	Psalm 40:6-10	Is. 63:15—65:2	Luke 2:41-52

A LOOK BACK TO THE LITURGY – DECEMBER 29, 2024

Theme: The birth, life, and death of Christ shall force all mankind to reveal their hearts to him.

Hymn: 360, “All My Heart Again Rejoices”

Summary of Readings:

Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15: By requiring His people to redeem every firstborn among their sons by the sacrifice a lamb, God not only points backward to their rescue from Egypt, but forward to the day when His own Firstborn Son would pay the redemption price that takes away the sin of the world.

Colossians 3:12-17: St. Paul writes, “As the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive,” showing us that the way of love and peace among us comes from receiving God’s gifts, then sharing God’s gifts “in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Luke 2:22-32: This account begins under the Law which requires Mary’s purification and Jesus’ presentation before the Lord. However, it is the Gospel that shines forth in Simeon’s song as God in Christ returns to His Holy Temple, shining the light of His salvation as the Redeemer of the world, to be the true beloved Son of Man.

MEMORY VERSE TO LEARN BY HEART:

John 1:1-3: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.”

THE CATECHISM: THE APOSTLE'S CREED: FIRST ARTICLE (PART 1)

(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.)

The First Article: Creation

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean (first paragraph)? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

PSALM OF THE WEEK: PSALM 111 (ESV)

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

¹Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. ²Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them. ³Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever. ⁴He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and merciful. ⁵He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever. ⁶He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations. ⁷The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy; ⁸they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. ⁹He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name! ¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

LUTHER'S PRAYER ON PSALM 111¹:

Praise belongs to You, our God, because You have fulfilled Your promises to Your people Israel in the incarnation of Your Son, and sent the light of Your truth to our fathers when they were walking in ignorance of You. Grant us steadfastly to trust Your covenant of grace that we may live therein. Make Your works of mercy and truth known to our children, that they may praise Your name in generations to come. Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS:

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You 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: *The Hansford Family* and their loved ones

Ed & Mitzi Salis, friends of the Haynes, who are in poor health

Kammy Roberson, the Weidners' relative, who is caretaker for her parents

All who travel over these holidays

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.