



A Guide for your Christian Life between Sundays

*The Feast of the Holy Innocents
December 28 through January 3, 2025*

It should be to us no surprise that right after the joyous birth of our Lord, when angels sing ‘Glory to God in the Highest,’ that we next read of, and so commemorate, the first attempt to murder Him. It would not be the first, nor even the second to last. Rather there are many times in which people try to kill our Lord throughout the Gospel, for the *Son of Man has no place to lay his head*. We too, as Christians, will always be under attack by the devil. Perhaps it will not be in the form of neighbors trying to stone us for what we say, but Satan will attack, and we must accept that this is our life as Christians. If Christ was so attacked, so shall we be also.

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. 28	Psalm 9:11-14	Is. 52:13—54:10	Matt. 2:13-23
Monday, Dec. 29	Psalm 78:1-7	Is. 55:1-13	Luke 1:1-25
Tuesday, Dec. 30	Psalm 89:1-4, 14-18	Is. 58:1—59:3, 14-21	Luke 1:26-38
Wednesday, Dec. 31	Psalm 111:1-6, 10	Is. 60:1-22	Luke 1:39-56
Thursday, Jan. 1	Psalm 113	Is. 61:1-11	Luke 1:57-80
Friday, Jan. 2	Psalm 62:5-8, 11-12	Is. 62:1-12	Luke 2:1-20
Saturday, Jan. 3	Psalm 108:1-6, 12-13	Is. 63:1-14	Luke 2:21-40

A LOOK BACK TO THE LITURGY – DECEMBER 28, 2025

Theme: The Holy Innocents teach us that it is the place of Christians to suffer for Christ, for Christ has suffered for us.

Hymn: 517 (st. 1, 9, 3), “By All Your Saints in Warfare”

Summary of Readings:

Jeremiah 31:15-17: God promises that He will return to Israel and once again guide them after they have received the punishment for their idolatry and wickedness.

Revelation 14:1-5: St. John sees a vision of the young martyrs, and those who committed themselves to celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom, who are declared as the firstfruits of those who have been redeemed.

Matthew 2:13-23: St. Matthew relates King Herod’s attempt to kill Jesus, fearing He may be a usurper, by putting to death all the children in Bethlehem under the age of two.

MEMORY VERSE TO LEARN BY HEART:

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

THE CATECHISM: THE APOSTLE'S CREED: SECOND ARTICLE (PART 2)

(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 does this mean? I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

PSALM OF THE WEEK: PSALM 54 (ESV)

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

¹O God, save me by your name, and vindicate me by your might. ²O God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth. ³For strangers have risen against me; ruthless men seek my life; they do not set God before themselves. ⁴Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life. ⁵He will return the evil to my enemies; in your faithfulness put an end to them. ⁶With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you; I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good. ⁷For he has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

LUTHER'S PRAYER ON PSALM 54¹:

Lord, our God, who desires not the death of the wicked, convert those who hate us without a cause, and turn the hearts of those who persecute Your Christians. Protect the poor and the innocent against the oppression of unjust men. Grant us patience under the cross, and preserve us in the true faith to our end. Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS:

Almighty God, the martyred innocents of Bethlehem showed forth Your praise not by speaking but by dying. Put to death in us all that is in conflict with Your will that our lives may bear witness to the faith we profess with our lips; 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: *Micah Everson* and his loved ones

Lyle Bundt, friend of the Rudsenskes, who is ill

Cole Fortenberry, Ben Rudsenske's boss, who is hospitalized with possible cancer

Dean Walker, a fellow Lutheran from Iowa visiting Mississippi, who is in the ICU

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.