



For your life in Christ the Week of the Third Sunday in Advent (Gaudete)

December 18-24, 2023

How to use this resource: 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. You will need your Bible, a Catechism, and an LSB Hymnal. Other resources named within may enrich your meditation.

Begin

Invocation

The sign of the cross + may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.
In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Hymn of the Week

LSB #345 “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding” (vv. 1-3)

Recite

Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life + everlasting. Amen.

Verse of the Week: Hebrews 2:14

“Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.”

The Family Altar

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and
Prayer in the Christian Home*

Meditate

Psalm: 60-Day Psalm Schedule

	<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Wed.</i>	<i>Thurs.</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Sat.</i>	<i>Sun.</i>
Morning	78	80	82, 84	85	88	89	91
Evening	79	81	83	86	87	90	93

Daily Bible Stories

<i>Day</i>	Week 16: Christmas Stories
Monday	Gabriel Appears to Zachariah - Luke 1:5-25
Tuesday	The Annunciation of Our Lord - Luke 1:26-38
Wednesday	Christ's Birth Is Foretold to Joseph - Matthew 1:18-25
Thursday	The Visitation - Luke 1:39-56
Friday	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist - Luke 1:57-80
Saturday	Look Ahead to Sunday's Readings (see last page)
Sunday	Attend Divine Service

Daily Lectionary Readings

December 18	Is 34:1-2, 8-35:10, Rev 6:1-17 <i>Micah 1:1-7:20</i>
December 19	Is 40:1-17, Rev 7:1-17
December 20	Is 40:18-41:10, Rev 8:1-13
December 21	Is 42:1-25, Rev 9:1-12
December 22	Is 43:1-24, Rev 9:13-10:11
December 23	Is 43:25-44:20, Rev 11:1-19
December 24	Is 44:21-45:13, 20-25, Rev 12:1-17 <i>Daniel 10:1-12:13, Isaiah 48:1-22</i>

Study

The Catechism

Participants may choose to study the catechism at their own pace or follow along with the selected portion of the catechism for the week.

Review 1st Article of the Creed

See p. 8 of the Learn by Heart Catechism



Pray

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Lord's Prayer

Collect for the Week:

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Daily Themes for Prayer

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

Morning or Evening Prayer from the Catechism

Close

Blessing

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the + Son,
and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us. **Amen.**

Observing the Church Year

Liturgical Color(s) of the Week: Rose, Red, White

Rose - A combination of white (the color of the pure glory of Christ) and red (the color of blood). Rose reminds us that the blood of Jesus Christ shed for our salvation is the source of our pure joy.

Red - The color of fire and blood. Red symbolizes the gift of the Holy Spirit and the blood of the martyrs.

White - The color of the pure glory of Christ and the angels. Jesus comes at the fullness of time as the complete fulfillment of God's promises. Jesus' resurrection is the cause for our rejoicing. His purity before the Father becomes our purity.

Feasts, Festivals, and Commemorations This Week

NOTE: The following resources contain great summaries of the observances of the church year

1. TDP- "Treasury of Daily Prayer"

2. CS- "Celebrating the Saints"

December 19 - Adam and Eve (B) (TDP p. 1032; CS p. 228)

December 20 - Katharina von Bora Luther (B) (TDP p. 1035; CS p. 230)

December 21 - St. Thomas the Apostle (R) (TDP p. 1038; CS p. 232)

December 24 - Christmas Eve (W) (TDP p. 1050; CS p. 234)

Looking Forward to Sunday

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

Readings: Deuteronomy 18:15-19; Philippians 4:4-7; John 1:19-28 or Luke 1:39-56

John the Baptizer Points Everyone to the Messiah

The coming of God in all His unveiled power at Mount Sinai was terrifying to the people of Israel. The thundering voice of the Lord puts sinners in fear of death (Deut. 18:15-19). God, therefore, raised up a prophet like Moses—the Messiah, the Christ. God came to His people veiled in human flesh. The skies poured down the Righteous One from heaven; the earth opened her womb and brought forth Salvation (Introit) through the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord (Luke 1:39-56). The fruit of her womb is the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the One whose sandal strap John was not worthy to loose (John 1:19-28). In Jesus we are delivered from fear and anxiety. In Him alone we have the peace of God which surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:4-7).