

The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
For the Week of the Third Sunday in Advent
December 13 through December 20, 2020*

Catechesis Notes for the Week —Psalm 102:12-28—A Prayer to Rely Upon the Goodness of the Lord Under Affliction—
The Lord does not abandon or forsake the promises He has made to His children, even though He lays affliction on our backs. Sometimes we suffer because of our own sins and bad choices. Sometimes we suffer through no direct fault of our own, but simply because we are part of this fallen world. In every instance, we are called to see our afflictions as an instrument of the Lord through which He intends to draw us closer to Himself, or to teach us the mysteries of His grace that we cannot learn in any other way but through the things under which we suffer. So, a pastoral prayer gives voice to what should be the prayer of every Christian: “Comfort us, O God, with Your Holy Spirit that we may patiently endure our afflictions and acknowledge them as a manifestation of Your fatherly will. Preserve us from faintheartedness and despondency, and help us to seek You, the great physician of our souls.” The second half of Psalm 102 draws us into this understanding of the Christian life, by confessing that the Lord endures forever, and the remembrance of His mercy continues throughout the generations. He is the One who builds up Zion, the Church. All the nations shall see this. He regards the prayer of the destitute and afflicted. He looks down from the height of His sanctuary to give help to His children. When He weakens our strength or shortens our days upon the earth, He does so for His kind and loving purposes that will serve for our ultimate good. The Lord’s abiding faithfulness to those who belong to Him is expressed at the center of the psalm: “This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord” and at the psalm’s conclusion, “You are the same, and your years will have no end. The children of Your servants will continue, and their descendants will be established before You.”

The Order of Meditation and Prayer

Pray and confess loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate. Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.

Theme: Comfort, Comfort Ye My People with My Mercy!

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Galatians 5:17

**The flesh lusts against the Spirit,
and the Spirit against the flesh;
and these are contrary to one another,
so that you do not do the things that you wish.**

Psalm 102:12-28 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: *Most merciful Father, comfort us with Your holy Spirit that we may patiently endure our afflictions and acknowledge them as a manifestation of Your fatherly will. Preserve us from faintheartedness and despondency, and help us to seek you, the great physician of our souls. When we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, do not allow us in our last hour, for any pain or fear of death to fall away from You, but grant us a peaceful departure and a joyful entrance into Your eternal kingdom, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	24,	122	33	50	18:1-20	102	90	24,
Evening	25, 110	40, 67	85, 91	14, 16	126, 62	130, 16	80, 72	25, 110

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	“Go and Tell John What You Hear and See”—Matthew 11:2-11	
Monday	Christ’s Birth Is Foretold to Joseph—Matthew 1:18-25	Isaiah 7:10-14
Tuesday	The Nativity of Our Lord—Luke 2:1-7	Isaiah 9:2-7
Wednesday	Advent Midweek: Raised at Christ’s Coming—1 Thess. 4:13-18	John 11:21-27
Thursday	The Birth of Christ Is Announced to Shepherds—Luke 2:8-14	Ex. 40:1-3, 16-21, 34-38
Friday	The Shepherds Visit Bethlehem—Luke 2:15-20	Isaiah 52:6-10
Saturday	The Lord Will Raise up a Prophet Like Moses—Deut. 18:15-19	Philippians 4:4-7

The Catechism: The Lord’s Prayer— The Fifth and Sixth Petitions

What is the Fifth Petition?

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Preschool +

<p><i>What does this mean?</i> We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.</p>	Second Grade +
<p><i>What is the Sixth Petition?</i> And lead us not into temptation.</p>	Preschool +
<p><i>What does this mean?</i> 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.</p>	Third Grade +

Prayers: Catechism Prayers, In Our Prayers at Peace, and the Collects for the Week

Prayer on the Fifth Petition

Heavenly Father, forgive us our trespasses. Do not look upon our sins or deny any of our prayers because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that You would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. Grant us Your forgiveness, so that we, too, will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer on the Sixth Petition

Heavenly Father, lead us out of temptation. 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; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

In Our Prayers this Week

Baptismal Birthdays: Katherine Laubenstein (12/13), Susan Kachelmeyer (12/15), Evan McMiller, (12/16).

Wedding Anniversaries: Brent and Evon Ingraham (12/16).

Thanksgiving: Karl Stemke and David Berger, blessed by therapy; Harlan Petersen, who completed cancer treatment.

The sick:

All those recovering from the Coronavirus.

Louise Johnson recuperating from knee replacement surgery. Dan Schmitt, recuperating from knee surgery.

Carl Duwe, in home care; Jeremy LaFore and his family as he battles ALS.

Jim Nitzsche, Brian Nienabor, Roger Laubenstein, Jill Franklin, and Allison Witte in treatment for cancer.

Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent

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.

Lord's Prayer and Morning or Evening Prayer from the Catechism

Hymn of the Week

"When All the World Was Cursed" (stanzas 1-2)

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Looking forward to the Fourth Sunday in Advent	December 20, 2020
Hymns: 331, 339, 350, 353, 351, 375	
Deuteronomy 18:15-19: <i>Jesus is the Prophet greater than Moses for He is Himself the Word incarnate, the glory of God, full of grace and truth. He does not merely proclaim the Law and Promises of God. He is their fulfillment. He is salvation.</i>	
Philippians 4:4-7: <i>Out of our faith in Christ we commend all of our needs, concerns, and anxieties to Him, knowing that we have the promise of full and complete salvation. Upon this promise our peace with God rests. The life of faith rejoices in all things, especially suffering, by which Christ is manifest in us. We rejoice in suffering because through the suffering of our Savior our life was reconciled to God.</i>	
John 1:19-28: <i>Priests and Levites were sent from Jerusalem to John the Baptist to inquire about his ministry and by what authority he was sent to preach and to baptize. The priests and Levites were custodians of the Old Testament temple worship and should have known what the Old Testament Scriptures and liturgy were preparing for. John clearly confessed that he was not the Christ, but rather "the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'" John quoted Isaiah the prophet that the priests and Levites might know that he was the promised forerunner who was sent by God to prepare the way for the Messiah's coming. John testified that the Messiah was the eternal Son of God by stating, "There stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me [or ranks higher than I], whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." By referring to the loosing of Messiah's sandal strap, John testified that Jesus was the true Redeemer Kinsman of His people, who would exercise the right of redemption by laying His foot bare in His death upon the cross. By the shedding of His blood He would redeem His people from their sins and crush Satan under His bruised heel (Gen. 3:15). John's testimony to Jesus and call to repentance continues to ring out today in faithful preaching that we might be prepared to receive Jesus in broken and contrite hearts.</i>	