

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

For the Week of the Fourth Sunday in Advent and the Nativity of Our Lord

December 20 through December 27, 2020

Catechesis Notes for the Week —Psalm 103—A Prayer in Praise of the Lord’s Mercy—*From the depths of his being, David calls upon his own soul and all that is within him to bless the Lord for the Lord’s mercy and for every benefit that he receives from the grace of God. The LORD forgives all iniquity. He heals all diseases. He redeems one’s life from destruction. He crowns the believer with loving kindness and tender mercies. He satisfies us with good things. He renews our life. All of this flows from the mercy of God in Christ our Redeemer. In Jesus God has executed righteousness and worked justice for all who were oppressed by sin and death. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in mercy which He so freely and faithfully made known to Moses and the children of Israel. Though He afflicts us, He, nevertheless, lets go of His anger and does not punish us as we deserve. His mercy is as different from the world’s concept of mercy as the heavens are high above the earth. His forgiveness means that He has removed our transgressions from us, like a father who pities his children. The Lord knows that we are made from dust. We will flower but soon wither and fade. But His mercy endures forever, from everlasting to everlasting. All angelic ministers in heaven and earth bless the Lord and do His pleasure as they proclaim the excellencies of His love in the preaching of the Gospel.*

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: He Lays His Foot Bare for Us to Crush the Serpent’s Head!

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Titus 3:4-5a

**When the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared,
not by works of righteousness which we have done,
but according to His mercy He saved us.**

Psalm 103 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: *Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new unto us every morning, and though we have not deserved Your goodness, You abundantly provide for all our wants of body and soul. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness toward us, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	24,	122	33	50	19	2	116	34
Evening	25, 110	40, 67	85, 91	14, 16	132, 114	98, 96	119:1-24, 27	19, 121

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Advent 4: John Prepares for the Redeemer—John 1:19-28	
Monday	St. Thomas, Apostle: John 20:24-29	Ephesians 4:7, 11-16
Tuesday	The Annunciation: Luke 1:26-38	Isaiah 7:10-14
Wednesday	The Birth of Christ Foretold to Joseph: Matthew 1:18-25	Isaiah 9:2-7
Thursday	Christmas Eve: The Nativity of Our Lord—Luke 2:1-20	Titus 2:11-14
Friday	Christmas Day: The Word Became Flesh—John 1:1-18	Titus 3:4-7
Saturday	St. Stephen, Martyr: Acts 6:8—7:2a, 51-60	Matthew 23:34-39

The Catechism: The Creed—The Second Article

What is the Second Article of the Creed?

And [I believe] in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord...

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,

Preschool +

First Grade +

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.

Second Grade +

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

In Our Prayers this Week

Baptismal Birthdays: Chuck Hartwig (12/19), Ashley Swiskoski (12/21), Charlotte Anderson (12/22), Magdalena Gehlbach,
Marc Schneider, Emma McMiller (12/25).

The sick:

All those recovering from the Coronavirus.

Duane Perry hospitalized after several strokes and other medical complications.

Bob Corso recuperating from a recent hospitalization for intestinal ailments.

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.

Those who mourn:

The family and friends of David Roth, Sr., who mourn his death.

The family and friends of Lois Verage, who mourn her death.

Collect for the week of the Fourth Sunday in Advent: (for December 20 through the morning of December 24)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Collect for St. Thomas, Apostle (December 21)

Almighty and ever-living God, You strengthened Your apostle Thomas with firm and certain faith in the resurrection of Your Son. Grant us such faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, that we may never be found wanting in Your sight; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Collect for the Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Eve and the remainder of the week)

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Collect for St. Stephen, Martyr (December 26)

Heavenly Father, in the midst of our sufferings for the sake of Christ grant us grace to follow the example of the first martyr, Stephen, that we also may look to the One who suffered and was crucified on our behalf and pray for those who do us wrong; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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

Hymn of the Week

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" (stanza 1-2)

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Looking forward to the First Sunday after Christmas

December 27, 2020

Hymns: 367, 389, 519, 375, 386, 937

Isaiah 11:1-5: Jesus' human lineage is from the stock of Jesse, the father of King David. Isaiah proclaims the work of the Triune God that surrounds the incarnation and ministry of the Son of God. The Holy Spirit from the Father will rest upon Him and enable Him to be faithful and to delight in performing the work of righteousness for our salvation.

Galatians 4:1-7: Paul declares that the birth of Christ came about according to the Scriptures "in the fullness of the times." God had directed all things in the history of the world so that His Son was born at just the right time for the salvation of the world. He was born under the obligations of God's Law in order to do for us what we were unable to do for ourselves. By His perfect obedience to the Law, Christ Jesus secures our redemption from sin, death, and the power of Satan.

Luke 2:22-40: Forty days after our Lord's birth He was presented in the temple at the time of Mary's purification from childbirth. At this visit the holy family meets the aged Simeon who prophesies that having received the Lord's Christ he is now able to depart this life in peace. Simeon speaks of Christ's death when he tells Mary that a sword will pierce through her own soul. Simeon's song, the Nunc Dimittis, is sung by us at the conclusion of the reception of the Lord's Supper. As Simeon received the Lord Jesus at His presentation in the temple, so we receive the Lord Jesus in the Lord's Supper and are prepared to "depart this life" according to God's will with the full assurance of sins forgiven "for [our] eyes have seen the Lord's salvation." The aged woman Anna, who had engaged in humble service in the temple for years, also rejoiced in the Lord's presentation and confessed Him to all who longed for redemption and salvation. Simeon and Anna give us a picture of what it is to be a Christian. We cling to Christ for salvation and boldly confess Him to the world in our vocation.