

# The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer  
For the Week of the Second Sunday in Advent  
December 5 through December 12, 2021*

**Catechesis Notes for the Week — Psalm 136: The Lord’s Mercy Endures Forever**—The most often repeated antiphon throughout the psalter is “Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.” This antiphon captures the heart of the Gospel and punctuates every verse of psalm 136. Our Savior is the God of gods and the Lord of lords because He is merciful. Mercy is not only at the heart of God’s nature, but it is also the source of that which sustains and saves the world. The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ in His suffering and death upon the cross is the source and cause of every blessing we enjoy. In other words, if Jesus had not suffered and died in mercy to save us from our sins, no one would receive the gifts of daily bread or enjoy any of God’s blessings. Psalm 136 traces this mercy from every act of God’s creation and sustaining of the universe to every act of His salvation for Israel. The psalm concludes by underscoring how the mercy of God for Israel’s salvation is also the mercy of God that is at work in the Gospel of Christ: “[He] remembered us in our lowly state...and rescued us from our enemies...Who gives food to all flesh, for His mercy endures forever.”

## **The Order of Meditation and Prayer**

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. Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.

## **Theme: The Lord Comforts His Church in the Latter Days!**

### **Invocation**

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

### **Apostles’ Creed**

**Verse: 1 Timothy 4:4-5**

Every creature of God is good,  
and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;  
for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

**Psalm 136 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.**

**Prayer on the Psalm:** O Lord Jesus, You are the God of gods and the Lord of lords because You alone are the God of mercy. Teach us to believe that Your mercy endures forever so that we will never doubt Your love, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. 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:**

	<b>Bible Narrative</b>	<b>Second Reading</b>
Sunday	<b>The Signs of Christ’s Coming—Luke 21:25-36</b>	
Monday	Gabriel Appears to Zachariah—Luke 1:5-25	Daniel 9:20-27
Tuesday	The Annunciation of Our Lord—Luke 1:26-38	2 Samuel 7:1-17
Wednesday	<b>MIDWEEK: Watch and Pray for His Coming—Mt. 24:4-14, 36-44</b>	
Thursday	The Visitation—Luke 1:39-56	Micah 5:2-5a
Friday	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist—Luke 1:56-80	Leviticus 26:40-45
Saturday	Sunday’s OT and Epistle—Isaiah 40:1-11	1 Corinthians 4:1-5

### **The Catechism: The Lord’s Prayer — Fourth Petition**

What is the Fourth Petition? <b>Give us this day our daily bread.</b>	Preschool +
What does this mean? God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.	First Grade +
What is meant by daily bread? Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.	Second Grade +

## **Prayers: Catechism Prayers, In Our Prayers at Peace, and the Collect for the Week**

### **Prayers on the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, You generously give daily bread to us and even to all evil people without our prayers. You richly and daily provide us with everything that we need to support us in our body and life. Lead us to realize this, that we might receive our daily bread with thanksgiving, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Heavenly Father, teach us to trust in You for daily bread and, according to Your good and gracious will, give us what we truly need to support us in our body and life, including food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like. All this we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **In Our Prayers this Week**

**The Office of the Ministry:** The Lord's guidance and blessing upon our calling of an Associate Pastor and Headmaster. Newly reelected Archbishop Christian Ekong and the Lutheran Church of Nigeria.

**Baptismal Birthdays:** Paul Schneider, Mary Schneider, Tom Haga (12/7), Cathie Weber (12/8), Dane Petersen (12/9).

**Those Who Serve in the Military:** Jessica Franklin (Air Force); John Franklin (Minnesota National Guard); Robert Haga (Marines); Evon Ingraham (Army Reserves); Mark Meyle (Marines); David Uttenreither (Army).

**Supreme Court:** Deliberations on constitutionality of limiting abortions.

**Thanksgiving for Healing Mercies:** Jeremy LaFore for continued recovery from paralysis; Gabby Hartwig for a reprieve from cancer, even as she continues to undergo therapeutic treatment.

**The Sick:** Doug Pom and Tom Pinzl recovering from hernia surgery; Jon Bruss recovering from surgery to correct an infection; Karen Leach, undergoing surgery for spinal compression fractures; Brett Arnold hospitalized and recovering from kidney transplant surgery; Luise Bollmeyer in continued care.

**Cancer Treatment:** Walter Dissen, brother of Eunice, diagnosed with melanoma, Nancy Thiele, friend of Polly Joubert and Jon and Marty Bruss, diagnosed with acute leukemia, Aburuyeba Amaso (breast cancer), Jim Nitzsche (lung cancer) recovering at home after specialized cancer treatment; James Loker (liver cancer), Josiah Boehringer (childhood cancer).

**Those Who Mourn:** The family of Jean Schumacher— aunt of Jim Schumacher, the family of Joyce Kanapka, and aunt of Melody Ruhbusch—who passed away.

### **Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent**

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You 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**

**"Once He Came in Blessing" (stanzas 1-4)**

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#### **Looking forward to the Third Sunday in Advent**

**December 12, 2021**

**Hymns: 347, 354, 345, 349, 602, 353, 849**

**Isaiah 40:1-11:** "Comfort, yes, comfort My people' says your God. Speak comfort to Jerusalem and cry out to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins." These words of glorious prophecy foretell the consummation of Christ's work through the preaching of the Gospel. By the proclamation of the Gospel the Holy Spirit lays upon our hearts the comfort of the forgiveness of all our sins. This gift of grace is greater than all our sins for it comes from the faithful Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep.

**1 Corinthians 4:1-5:** The Apostle Paul speaks of himself and all ministers of the Gospel as "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." In this section of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, he is encouraging the pastors in Corinth to be faithful to the Word of God in their preaching and in their administration of the Sacraments. They are to be engaged in faithful catechesis, so that the gifts of the Sacraments, called in this section, "the mysteries of grace," might be received faithfully in the congregation. He makes it clear that while the pastors are called to serve the Church, they are nonetheless accountable to Christ who calls them to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments faithfully according to God's Word.

**Matthew 11:2-11:** John the Baptist didn't have a very long ministry. He had no retirement. He had no pension. He preached for a few years preparing the way for Jesus' coming. He was imprisoned by King Herod Antipas and, shortly after the events of this Gospel reading, his head was cut off and presented to the king's brother's wife Herodias with whom Herod had been in an adulterous marriage. So goes the way of God's faithful prophets in this world. When they preach repentance, uncovering man's sin in order to proclaim to them God's salvation in Christ, they are persecuted and put to death. The imprisonment and death of John the Baptist teaches us that there are more important things in life than happiness and success, namely Christ. He is our Lord and Savior. He is the object of our worship and the focus of our hope. It is Christ alone who leads us by and through His suffering and death to the glory of eternal life with God. By all the things through which we suffer, faith is tried in a furnace, the dross is purged, and we are fitted for the Kingdom of God. This is why the introit for this Sunday is the Word of God from Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!"