

# The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer  
For the Week of the Second Sunday in Advent  
December 10 through December 17, 2023

**Catechesis Notes for the Week — He Comes Like Lightning** — “Lightning is swift and visible by all across the horizon. This is why Jesus compares His Second Coming to lightning. He will appear again suddenly, and all will see Him. He calls us to “be ready” through the hearing of His Word, in daily contrition and repentance, with faith fixed firmly upon Him, because He will come at an hour we do not expect. That no one knows the time of our Lord’s Second Coming highlights the fact that Christians are to live each day by repentant faith in Christ as if He could appear again at any moment.” (Excerpted from Lutheran Catechesis: Catechist Edition, p. 128b, used by permission)

## 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 Son of Man Comes with Power and Great Glory!

### Invocation

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

### Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Matthew 24:27, 44

As the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west,  
so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.  
Therefore you also be ready,  
for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Psalm 50:1-15 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

**Prayer on the Psalm:** O Almighty God, You have knit together Your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of Your Son. Grant us Your Holy Spirit, we beseech You, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we may abound in hope, being filled with all joy and peace in believing; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You 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:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	<b>The Coming of the Son of Man—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>Advent: Jesus Restores to Life—Mark 5:21-42/Third Article</b>	
Thursday	The Visitation—Luke 1:39-56	Micah 5:2-5a
Friday	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist—Luke 1:57-66	Isaiah 40:1-11
Saturday	Comfort My People—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: The Collect for the Week, Daily Themes for Prayer, In Our Prayers at Peace**

**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.

**Daily Themes for Prayer — “Let us pray...”**

- Sunday:** For the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.
- Monday:** 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:** For deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.
- Wednesday:** 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:** 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:** 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:** 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 this Week — “Let us pray for...”**

**The Baptismal Anniversaries:** Bethany Christiansen (12/13), Sue Kachelmeyer (12/15), Evan McMiller, Kayla Kütemeier (12/16).

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

**The Sick:** Mark Gretzinger recuperating from knee surgery; George Kaminski recovering from pneumonia; Anna Steinhilb recovering from colon surgery; Chase (infant son of Del Duwe’s grand-niece) hospitalized with seizures; Patty Rothe in rehab.

**Those in Cancer Treatment:** Rev. Dr. John Wille, Rev. Luke Boehringer, Jean Reuss, Michael (friend of the Steinhilbs), and Gabby Hartwig.

**Those in Hospice Care:** Lyle Wollin; Sue Everhardt (Gil Leon’s family friend)

**Those Who Mourn:** the family & friends who mourn the death of Jan Wollin.

**Lord’s Prayer and Morning or Evening Prayer from the Catechism.**

**Hymn of the Week**

**“Comfort, Comfort Ye My People” (stanza 1-2)**

347

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

**December 17, 2023**

**Hymns: 347, 345, 344, 354, 349, 348, 342**

**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 did not 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!” return all the more. In other words, when we see the signs which cause the world great distress, we are called to be encouraged that the Lord is fulfilling His Word just as He said. “This generation”—the church— “will by no means pass away till all things are fulfilled. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” That is wonderful comfort for the redeemed of the Lord!