

The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
The Week of the Third Sunday in Advent
December 14 through December 21, 2025*

Catechesis Notes for the Week— Joseph, the Guardian of Jesus, and Christian Vocation (Read Matthew 1:18-25): Joseph, the Guardian of Jesus as he is often called, had a difficult vocation. He was called to be Mary's husband and Jesus' earthly father. This calling meant a life of suffering and self-denial. This is always what true faith calls us to: a life of sacrificial love in which we deny ourselves. This is the shape of our lives as Christians because our life is lived by faith in the God and Savior who lived in selfless love for us. The Child conceived in Mary's womb was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Mary was not an adulteress. His name would be called "Jesus" because He is the Lord who would save His people from their sins by becoming one with them in their flesh and blood. All this was done to fulfill the Scriptures, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel." This means that God is with us in the poverty and humiliation of our human condition in order to redeem us by the sacrifice of Himself. Joseph had no strength to fulfill his vocation within himself, but he was strengthened by the Holy Spirit through the promises of the Scriptures and the message of God's selfless love for him and for all his people. This is our strength too in our vocation. The Gospel not only saves us from our sins, but it also strengthens and keeps us in the love of Christ in the earthly vocations to which our Lord has called us.

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: Then Shall the Eyes of the Blind Be Opened.

Invocation

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

Apostles' Creed

Verse: Psalm 51:5

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin my mother conceived me.

Psalm 146 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on Psalm 146: O Lord Jesus, You open the eyes of the blind, You raise up those who are bowed down in contrition and repentance, You love the righteous whom You have forgiven, You watch over us and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Teach us to place our hope in You as our Creator and Redeemer, and to praise You as long as we have our being, 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	95, 96	98, 100	101	103	105	107	109	112, 113
Evening	97	99	102	104	106	108	110, 111	114

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Advent 3: Tell John What You See and Hear—Matt. 11:2-15	
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	Midweek: Watch and Pray—Luke 21:25-38	2 Peter 3:10-14
Thursday	The Visitation—Luke 1:39-56	1 Samuel 2:1-11
Friday	The Nativity of St. John the Baptist—Luke 1:57-66	Leviticus 26:40-45
Saturday	Advent 4: Isaiah 7:10-17	Romans 1:1-7

Catechism: Lord's Prayer—Fifth and Sixth Petitions

What is the Fifth Petition? And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.	Preschool +
What does this mean? 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.	Second Grade +
What is the Sixth Petition? And lead us not into temptation.	Preschool +

What does this mean?
 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.

Third Grade +

Prayers: Collect for the Week, Daily Themes for Prayer, and In Our Prayers at Peace

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.

Pray the “O Antiphon” and appropriate stanza of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (LSB 357) appointed for the Day

Wednesday, December 17: “O Wisdom” – Stanza 2

Thursday, December 18: “O Adonai” (Lord) – Stanza 3

Friday, December 19: “O Root of Jesse” – Stanza 4

Saturday, December 20: “O Key of David” – Stanza 5

Sunday, December 21: “O Dayspring” – Stanza 6

Monday, December 22: “O King of the Nations” – Stanza 7

Tuesday, December 23: “O Emmanuel” – Stanza 1

Daily Themes for Prayer — from LSB p. 294

In Our Prayers this Week — “Let us pray for...”

Baptismal anniversaries: Evan McMiller (12/16); Chuck Hartwig (12/19.)

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

The sick: Terry O'Neill, Carol Bender, Mark Anderson, and Richard Leach in rehab; David Jones recuperating at home; Anne Fox (Betsy Banasik's sister) who is hospitalized; Kevin Kehres, recovering from hip replacement surgery; Chrissy Artru (friend of the Duesslers), undergoing treatment for kidney transplant rejection.

In cancer treatment: Michael Gehl (friend of the Brusses), Mary O'Flyng (acquaintance of the Rothes), Tim Francis (brother of Cheri LaFore); Loretta Lampen; Ivy Kunkel, Tracy Espinosa, Ken Hinckle, Gary Luderman, Diane Bulawa, and Rev. Luke Boehringer.

Those who mourn: the family and friends of Barb Wieting (wife of Rev. Ken Wieting).

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

Hymn of the Week

“Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”

345

Looking forward to the Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21, 2025

Hymns: 338, 359, 352, 546, 624, 381

Isaiah 7:10-17: Ahaz, the King of Judah, was not a very pious king. Though the Lord told him to ask for a sign that the Lord might show His faithfulness to the house of Judah, Ahaz refused. In the face of his stubbornness, the Lord Himself gave Ahaz and the people of Judah a sign: “Behold, a virgin will conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” Apart from any help or contribution from a sinful human being, this “sign” was fulfilled in the virgin conception and birth of Jesus. By this “sign” we know that God is not only with us, but that salvation is a free gift of His faithfulness and mercy in Jesus.

Romans 1:1-7: The Apostle Paul begins his great epistle to the Romans by highlighting the great truth that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the message of salvation that was “promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures.” This Gospel, recorded on all the pages of the Old Testament is truly about God's “Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” Through Christ, we have “grace and peace” from God our Father. This Gospel is the heart of the Apostolic Word which Paul and his fellow apostles preach for the creation and preservation of the Church of Christ.

Matthew 1:18-25: Joseph, the Guardian of Jesus as he is often called, had a difficult vocation. He was called to be Mary's husband and Jesus' earthly father. This calling meant a life of suffering and self-denial. This is always what true faith calls us to: a life of sacrificial love in which we deny ourselves. This is the shape of our lives as Christians because our life is lived by faith in the God and Savior who lived in selfless love for us. The Child conceived in Mary's womb was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Mary was not an adulteress. His name would be called “Jesus” because He is the Lord who would save His people from their sins by becoming one with them in their flesh and blood. All this was done to fulfill the Scriptures, “Behold, a virgin shall be with child and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which means that God is with us in the poverty and humiliation of our human condition to redeem us by the sacrifice of Himself. Joseph had no strength to fulfill His vocation within himself, but He was strengthened by the Holy Scriptures and the message of God's selfless love for him and for all his people. This is our strength too in our vocation. The Gospel not only saves us from our sins, but it also strengthens and keeps us in the love of Christ in the earthly vocations to which our Lord has called us.