



ABC Devotions

(Follow the Alphabet for your individual or family devotion.)

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

For the Week of December 23, 2018 through December 29, 2018

A. Make the sign of the cross in remembrance of your baptism and say: **In the name of the Father and of the ✕ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

B. Confess the Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ✕ everlasting. Amen.

C. Pray the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

D. Pray the Prayer Appropriate for Time of Day

Morning

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Evening

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that you would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

E. Daily Bible Reading

Sunday: Luke 1:39-56 In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, 40and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, 42and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.” 46And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, 47and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. 51He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; 52he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; 53he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. 54He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.” 56And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Monday: Luke 2:1-20 [1] In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. [2] This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. [3] And all went to be registered, each to his own town. [4] And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, [5] to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. [6] And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. [7] And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. [8] And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. [9] And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. [10] And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. [11] For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. [12] And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” [13] And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, [14] “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” [15] When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” [16] And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. [17] And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. [18] And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. [19] But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. [20] And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Tuesday: John 1:1-18 1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. 6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. 9The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. 10He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12But to all who did receive him, who believed in

his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. 14And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15(John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) 16And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

Wednesday (St. Stephen, Martyr): Acts 7:54-60 54Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. 55But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” 57But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. 58Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 60And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Thursday (St. John, Apostle and Evangelist): John 21:20-25 20Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had been reclining at table close to him and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” 21When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?” 22Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” 23So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?” 24This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. 25Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Friday (Holy Innocents): Matthew 2:13-18 13When [the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” 14And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 15and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.” 16Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. 17Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 18“*A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.*”

Saturday: Isaiah 9:2-7 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. 3 You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. 5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

F. Catechism Reading for the Week

The Lord's Prayer The First Petition

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean? God's name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray in this petition that it may be kept holy among us also.

How is God's name kept holy? God's name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God's Word profanes the name of God among us. Protect us from this, heavenly Father!

G. Verse for the Week:

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

H. Pray the Prayer for the Week

Collect for the week of the Fourth Sunday in Advent:

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.

I. Pray for Others and Ourselves (See below for daily themes.)

Daily Themes for Prayer

Sunday: Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.

Monday: Pray 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: Pray for deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.

Wednesday: Pray 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: Pray 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: Pray 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: Pray 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.

J. Sing or Say the Hymn of the Week

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

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