



**ON EARTH  
AS IT IS  
IN HEAVEN**

*a guide for prayer*



# THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

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,  
FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

*Matthew 6:9-13*

Dear friends,

Talking about the subject of praying produces an array of emotions in the Christian, among them: confusion, doubt, anxiety, and above all guilt! It seems that everyone knows that they should pray, but when it comes to actually praying, most of us struggle. Despite hearing a lot of people talking about it (maybe even a lot of teaching on it), we still do not seem to know HOW to pray, when it gets down to it.

I think there are a number of reasons for this but often it often stems from confusion. For many, we've been told that prayer is merely a formula to follow, something like the acrostic ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication). On the other hand, many people reject the formulas altogether saying you should just "talk to God" like he's your father. On the one hand, we know that prayer should be personal, yet we are often told that our prayers are selfish if we focus too much on ourselves. We know we should also be praying for our political and spiritual leaders, and our non-Christian friends, and Aunt Alice's sore toe!

It's all too much! So it's easier to feel guilty...and not pray.

One thing that helps immensely with this problem is realizing that you don't need to pray "all by yourself." Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote "...it is a dangerous error, surely widespread among Christians, to think the heart can pray by itself." He didn't mean that we should not pray in solitude. Sometimes being alone physically is very helpful for prayer. He meant that we need help in prayer, sometimes even the exact words to say. This is the heart of the disciples cry when they come to Jesus and say, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Jesus does. His prayer is simple, profound, and absolutely foundational to our life in God.

This devotional is designed to give you a running start in prayer. You can pray the words of Jesus. You can pray the words of the psalms. You can pray the words of the saints who have gone before you. Some days, that's all you have, and it's enough. Other times, you may find your communion with God skyrocketing and you can stop the overflow of your heart into prayer.

But start with this: If you have received Christ by faith, you have "everything you need for life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). God is not waiting for you to reach a daily quota in prayer. He loves you as a Father loves his children. He understands the ups and downs. Many times I've returned to the quote below to jumpstart a renewed life of prayer. I hope it helps you as well.

Gray Ewing  
Pastor, New Valley Downtown

*"You don't know how to pray? Put yourself in the presence of God, and as soon as you have said, 'Lord, I don't know how to pray!' you can be sure you've already begun."*  
Josemaría Escrivá

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Please use this guide however it is most helpful to you. Here's a recommended place to start. First begin with intentionality. Choose a time of the day during this season of Advent to intentionally pray. I suggest setting aside 20-25 minutes. For most people, this is easiest to do first thing in the morning, but you could also do it right after lunch or before bed. Give yourself enough time every day to pray the following ways...

**Stillness and Silence:** Be still and know that God is God, and you are his special creation. You are body and soul. God often uses stillness and quiet to reveal what's going on in our heads and bodies. You may notice that your leg hurts from pacing too much or that your jaw is clenched. You may notice a rush of anxious thoughts and "to-dos" come running at you. Notice those things, and let them pass away for a time. Enjoy God's presence.

**Pray with Jesus:** Each week, there is a petition from the Lord's prayer at the top of the page. Every day of that week, meditate on those words and pray them a few times in God's presence.

**Pray with the Psalms:** The 6 psalms in this devotional have been chosen to compliment the idea of Jesus' prayer or to complement the season (Advent/Christmas). Every day for a week, read the psalm again. Allow your heart to latch onto one phrase or one verse and pray it.

**Pray with the Saints:** Every day for six weeks, there is a prayer or spiritual poem from some other Christian, whether it is a church Father or a modern day saint like Billy Graham. Most of them are related to the season of Advent. Read and pray these words.

**Pray with your Father:** After reading/praying other people's words, what is God leading your heart to say? Is there something to confess? Is there something to thank God for? Is there some person on your heart? Pray as long as you want to, knowing that your Father in heaven cares for you.

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# WEEK 1

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy Name*

## SILENCE

Begin by sitting in complete silence for a few minutes. Become aware that you are a created being. You are body and soul. Become aware that God is present with you.

## PSALM OF THE WEEK | PSALM 96

Oh sing to the Lord a new song;  
sing to the Lord, all the earth!  
Sing to the Lord, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.  
Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous works among all the peoples!  
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;  
he is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,  
but the Lord made the heavens.  
Splendor and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.  
Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!  
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and come into his courts;  
Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;[a]  
tremble before him, all the earth!  
Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!  
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;  
he will judge the peoples with equity."  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;  
let the sea roar, and all that fills it  
Let the field exult, and everything in it!  
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy  
before the Lord, for he comes,  
for he comes to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world in righteousness,  
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

*Every day when you read this psalm, underline or highlight phrases that stand out to you. Why is your soul drawn to this? Feel free to write in the margins.*

## NOVEMBER 26

Teach me to pray.

I confess that in religious exercises  
the language of my lips and the feelings  
of my heart have not always agreed,  
that I have frequently taken carelessly upon  
my tongue a name never pronounced above  
without reverence and humility,  
that I have often desired things which would  
have injured me,  
that I have depreciated some of my chief  
mercies,  
that I have erred both on the side of my hopes  
and also of my fears,  
that I am unfit to choose for myself,  
for it is not in me to direct my steps.  
Let thy Spirit help my infirmities,  
for I know not what to pray for as I ought.  
Let him produce in me wise desires by which  
I may ask right things,  
then I shall know thou hearest me.  
May I never be importunate for temporal  
blessings,  
but always refer them to thy fatherly goodness,  
for thou knowest what I need before I ask;  
May I never think I prosper unless my soul  
prosper,  
or that I am rich unless rich toward thee,  
or that I am wise unless wise unto salvation.  
May I seek first thy kingdom and its  
righteousness.

*Valley of Vision, "Desires"*

## NOVEMBER 27

Father in heaven,  
our hearts desire the warmth of your love  
and our minds are searching for the light of your  
Word.

Increase our longing for Christ our Savior  
and give us the strength to grow in love,  
that the dawn of his coming  
may find us rejoicing in his presence  
and welcoming the light of his truth.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

*International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL)*

## NOVEMBER 28

I am loved with everlasting love,  
clothed in eternal righteousness,  
my peace flowing like a river,  
my comforts many and large,  
my joy and triumph unutterable,  
my soul lively with a knowledge of salvation,  
my sense of justification unclouded....

O when shall I have his mind!  
when shall I be conformed to his image?  
All the good things of life are less than nothing  
when compared with his love,  
and with one glimpse of thy electing favour.  
All the treasures of a million worlds could not  
make me richer, happier, more contented,  
for his unsearchable riches are mine.  
One moment of communion with him, one view  
of his grace,  
is ineffable, inestimable.  
But O God, I could not long after thy presence  
if I did not know the sweetness of it;  
And such I could not know except by thy Spirit  
in my heart, nor love thee at all unless thou  
didst  
elect me,  
call me,  
adopt me,  
save me.  
I bless thee for the covenant of grace.

*Valley of Vision, Assurance*

## NOVEMBER 29

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace. may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer, Collect*

## NOVEMBER 30

We give you thanks, Holy Father,  
for your holy name, which you have caused to  
dwell in our hearts,  
and for the knowledge and faith and immortality  
that you have made known to us through Jesus  
your servant;  
to you be the glory forever.  
You, almighty Master, created all things for your  
name's sake,  
and gave food and drink to humans to enjoy, so  
that they might give you thanks;  
but to us you have graciously given spiritual food  
and drink,  
and eternal life through your servant.  
Above all we give thanks to you because you are  
mighty;  
to you be the glory forever.  
Remember your church, Lord,  
to deliver us from all evil and to make it perfect in  
your love;  
and from the four winds gather the church that  
has been sanctified into your kingdom,  
which you have prepared for it;  
for yours is the power and the glory forever.

*From the Didache, 1st Century*

## DECEMBER 1

Rejoice and be merry in song and in mirth!  
O praise our Redeemer, all mortals of earth!  
For this is the birthday of Jesus our King,  
Who brought us salvation—His praises we'll sing!

*Anonymous, Medieval Hymn*



# WEEK 2

*Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*

## SILENCE

Begin by sitting in complete silence for a few minutes. Become aware that you are a created being. You are body and soul. Become aware that God is present with you.

## PSALM OF THE WEEK | PSALM 97

The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice;  
let the many coastlands be glad!  
Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;  
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.  
Fire goes before him  
and burns up his adversaries all around.  
His lightnings light up the world;  
the earth sees and trembles.  
The mountains melt like wax before the Lord,  
before the Lord of all the earth.  
The heavens proclaim his righteousness,  
and all the peoples see his glory.  
All worshipers of images are put to shame,  
who make their boast in worthless idols;  
worship him, all you gods!  
Zion hears and is glad,  
and the daughters of Judah rejoice,  
because of your judgments, O Lord.  
For you, O Lord, are most high over all the earth;  
you are exalted far above all gods.  
O you who love the Lord, hate evil!  
He preserves the lives of his saints;  
he delivers them from the hand of the wicked.  
Light is sown[a] for the righteous,  
and joy for the upright in heart.  
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous,  
and give thanks to his holy name!

*Every day when you read this psalm, underline or highlight phrases that stand out to you. Why is your soul drawn to this? Feel free to write in the margins.*

## DECEMBER 2

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and [the]\* dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer, Collect for 1st Sunday in Advent*

## DECEMBER 3

Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer, Proper 29*

## DECEMBER 4

Lord, we have not kept watch for you.  
We have occupied ourselves with our own concerns.  
We have not waited to find your will for us.  
We have not noticed the needs of the people around us.  
We have not acknowledged the love that has been shown to us. Forgive us for our lack of watchfulness.  
Help us to wait to know your will.  
Help us to look out for the needs of others.  
Help us to work and watch for your coming.  
Amen.

*Worship Sourcebook, Advent Confession*

## DECEMBER 5

Come, Sun and Savior, to embrace Our gloomy world,  
its weary race,  
As groom to bride, as bride to groom:  
The wedding chamber, Mary's womb.  
At your great Name, O Jesus, now  
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;  
All things on earth with one accord,  
Like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.  
Come in your holy might, we pray,  
Redeem us for eternal day;  
Defend us while we dwell below,  
From all assaults of our dread foe.

*Advent Evening Hymn (8th Century)*

## DECEMBER 6

Descent  
Down he came from up,  
and in from out,  
and here from there.  
A long leap,  
an incandescent fall  
from magnificent  
to naked, frail, small,  
through space,  
between stars,  
into our chill night air,  
shrunk, in infant grace,  
to our damp, cramped  
earthy place  
among all  
the shivering sheep.  
And now, after all,  
there he lies,  
fast asleep.

*Luci Shaw*

## **DECEMBER 7**

Father, I open myself to you. Letting go of all else,  
I come to you with empty, open hands.  
I entrust myself to You, believing that true riches,  
true worth, and true vision come only from you.  
Yes, Lord, have Your way in me.  
Thank You for Jesus who redeems me from the pit  
of self and into the joy of you. Amen.

*Ted Wueste, Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room*

## **DECEMBER 8**

Because God loves us with a never stopping,  
Never giving up, unbreaking, always and  
forever love—  
Heaven is breaking through!  
He is sending us a Light from Heaven  
To shine on us like the sun  
To shine on those who live in darkness  
And in the shadow of death  
To guide our feet into the way of peace.

*Zechariah's Song, Jesus Storybook Bible,  
Sally Lloyd-Jones*

# WEEK 3

*Give us this day our daily bread*

## SILENCE

Begin by sitting in complete silence for a few minutes. Become aware that you are a created being. You are body and soul. Become aware that God is present with you.

## PSALM OF THE WEEK | PSALM 24

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,  
the world and those who dwell therein,  
for he has founded it upon the seas  
and established it upon the rivers.  
Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?  
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
who does not lift up his soul to what is false  
and does not swear deceitfully.  
He will receive blessing from the Lord  
and righteousness from the God of his salvation  
Such is the generation of those who seek him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.[b] Selah  
Lift up your heads, O gates!  
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.  
Who is this King of glory?  
The Lord, strong and mighty,  
the Lord, mighty in battle!  
Lift up your heads, O gates!  
And lift them up, O ancient doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.  
Who is this King of glory?  
The Lord of hosts,  
he is the King of glory!

*Every day when you read this psalm, underline or highlight phrases that stand out to you. Why is your soul drawn to this? Feel free to write in the margins.*

## DECEMBER 9

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer, Collect for 2nd Sunday in Advent*

## DECEMBER 10

Arise, shine: for your light has come.  
O God, we live as if the light had never defeated the darkness in the world or in us.  
And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.  
We confess that we ignore the Christ you sent to be among us, to be in us.  
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. We've kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his birth each moment in our waiting hearts. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.  
Lord, you came to us in the fullness of time. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to your coming.  
It's time that we prepare for your coming.  
Let the earth ring with song. Let the light break forth.  
Let us all rejoice in the miracle of love.  
Let Christ come into the fullness of our time.  
Amen.

*Worship Sourcebook, based on Isaiah 60:1-3*

## DECEMBER 11

O Christ, All thy ways of mercy tend to and end in my delight.  
Thou didst weep, sorrow, suffer that I might rejoice.  
For my joy thou hast sent the Comforter, multiplied thy promises, shown me my future happiness, given me a living fountain.  
Thou art preparing joy for me and me for joy; I pray for joy, wait for joy, long for joy; give me more than I can hold, desire, or think of.  
Measure out to me my times and degrees of joy, at my work, business, duties.  
If I weep at night, give me joy in the morning.  
Let me rest in the thought of thy love, pardon for sin, my title to heaven, my future unspotted state.  
I am an unworthy recipient of thy grace.

*Valley of Vision, "Joy"*

## DECEMBER 12

Lord Jesus,  
Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.  
We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.  
We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.  
We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.  
We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.  
We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.  
To you we say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" Amen.

*Advent Prayer, Henri Nouwen*

## DECEMBER 13

Moonless darkness stands between.  
Past, the Past, no more be seen!  
But the Bethlehem star may lead me  
To the sight of Him who freed me  
From the self that I have been.  
Make me pure, Lord: Thou art holy;  
Make me meek, Lord: Thou wert lowly;  
Now beginning, and always,  
Now begin, on Christmas day.  
Christmas Novena  
Hail, and blessed be the hour and moment  
At which the Son of God was born  
Of a most pure Virgin  
At a stable at midnight in Bethlehem  
In the piercing cold  
At that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee,  
To hear my prayers and grant my desires  
Through Jesus Christ and His most blessed  
Mother.

*Christmas Prayer, Gerard Manley Hopkins*

## DECEMBER 14

Lord God  
we praise you for creating man,  
and still more for restoring him in Christ.  
Your Son shared our weakness:  
may we share his glory,  
for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy  
Spirit, one God  
for ever and ever. Amen.

*Liturgy of the Hours*

## DECEMBER 15

My dear Lord, I can but tell thee that thou  
knowest  
I long for nothing but thyself,  
nothing but holiness,  
nothing but union with thy will.  
Thou hast given me these desires,  
and thou alone canst give me the thing  
desired...  
Wrap my life in divine love,  
and keep me ever desiring thee,  
always humble and resigned to thy will,  
more fixed on thyself,  
that I may be more fitted for doing  
and suffering.

*Valley of Vision, "Longings after God"*

# WEEK 4

*And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us*

## SILENCE

Begin by sitting in complete silence for a few minutes. Become aware that you are a created being. You are body and soul. Become aware that God is present with you.

## PSALM OF THE WEEK | THE PSALM OF MARY, THE MAGNIFICAT

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for he who is mighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

And his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

he has brought down the mighty from their thrones

and exalted those of humble estate;

he has filled the hungry with good things,

and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

as he spoke to our fathers,

to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

*Luke 1: 46-55*

*Every day when you read this psalm, underline or highlight phrases that stand out to you. Why is your soul drawn to this? Feel free to write in the margins.*

## DECEMBER 16

O LORD Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever, One God, world without end. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer, Collect for 3rd Sunday in Advent*

## INTRODUCTION TO “O” ANTIPHONES

*Ever since around the 7th Century, there have been a set of 7 prayers that have either been recited or sung in church called the “O” Antiphones. You may be familiar with them from the hymn “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.” Traditionally, these are prayed December 17th-23rd. Also, they are in response to The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) which is our “Psalm of the Week” above. Read the magnificat slowly first, then pray with the saints who have prayed for centuries before you!*

## DECEMBER 17

O Wisdom,  
O Holy Word of God,  
You govern all creation with your strong, yet tender care.  
Come, and show your people the way to salvation.

## DECEMBER 18

O Sacred Lord of ancient Israel,  
who showed yourself to Moses  
in the burning bush,  
who gave him the holy law on Sinai mountain:  
Come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free

## DECEMBER 19

O Flower of Jesse's stem,  
You have been raised up as a sign for all peoples;  
Kings stand silent in your presence;  
the nations bow down in worship before you.  
Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid

## DECEMBER 20

O Key of David,  
O Royal Power of Israel  
Controlling at your will the gate of heaven:  
Come, break down the prison walls of death  
for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death;  
and lead your captive people into freedom

## DECEMBER 21

O Radiant Dawn,  
Splendor of eternal light,  
Sun of justice:  
Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death

## DECEMBER 22

O King of all the nations,  
the only joy of every human heart;  
O Keystone of the mighty arch of man,  
Come and save the creature you fashioned from the dust



# WEEK 5

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*

## SILENCE

Begin by sitting in complete silence for a few minutes. Become aware that you are a created being. You are body and soul. Become aware that God is present with you.

## PSALM OF THE WEEK | PSALM 143

Hear my prayer, O Lord, Give ear to my supplications!  
Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness!  
And do not enter into judgment with Your servant,  
For in Your sight no man living is righteous.

For the enemy has persecuted my soul; He has crushed my life to the ground;  
He has made me dwell in dark places, like those who have long been dead.  
Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me;  
My heart is appalled within me.  
I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your doings;  
I muse on the work of Your hands. I stretch out my hands to You;  
My soul longs for You, as a parched land.  
Answer me quickly, O Lord, my spirit fails;

Do not hide Your face from me,  
Or I will become like those who go down to the pit.  
Let me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning; For I trust in You;  
Teach me the way in which I should walk; For to You I lift up my soul.

Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies; I take refuge in You.  
Teach me to do Your will,  
For You are my God;  
Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.  
For the sake of Your name, O Lord, revive me.  
In Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble.  
And in Your lovingkindness, cut off my enemies  
And destroy all those who afflict my soul,  
For I am Your servant.

*Every day when you read this psalm, underline or highlight phrases that stand out to you. Why is your soul drawn to this? Feel free to write in the margins.*

## DECEMBER 23

O Emmanuel,  
King and Lawgiver  
Desire of the nations,  
Savior of all people,  
Come and set us free, Lord, our God!

O LORD, raise up, we pray thee, thy power, and  
come among us,  
and with great might succour us; that whereas,  
through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let  
and hindered in running the race that is set  
before us,  
thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help  
and 'deliver us;  
through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord,  
to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost,  
be honour and glory, world with out end. Amen

*Book of Common Prayer, Collect for 4th  
week of advent*

## DECEMBER 24

The feast day of your birth resembles You, Lord  
Because it brings joy to all humanity.  
Old people and infants alike enjoy your day.  
Your day is celebrated  
from generation to generation.  
Kings and emperors may pass away,  
And the festivals to commemorate  
them soon lapse.  
But your festival will be remembered  
until the end of time.  
Your day is a means and a pledge of peace.  
At Your birth heaven and earth were reconciled,  
Since you came from heaven  
to earth on that day  
You forgave our sins and wiped away our guilt.  
You gave us so many gifts  
on the day of your birth:  
A treasure chest of spiritual medicines  
for the sick;  
Spiritual light for the blind;  
The cup of salvation for the thirsty;  
The bread of life for the hungry.  
In the winter when trees are bare,  
You give us the most succulent spiritual fruit.

In the frost when the earth is barren,  
You bring new hope to our souls.  
In December when seeds are hidden in the soil,  
The staff of life springs forth from the virgin womb

*St. Ephraim the Syrian*

## DECEMBER 25

Let the just rejoice,  
for their justifier is born.  
Let the sick and infirm rejoice,  
For their Saviour is born.  
Let the captives rejoice,  
For their Redeemer is born.  
Let slaves rejoice,  
for their Master is born.  
Let free men rejoice,  
For their Liberator is born.  
Let All Christians rejoice,  
For Jesus Christ is born.

*St. Augustine of Hippo*

## DECEMBER 26

O sweet Child of Bethlehem,  
grant that we may share with all our hearts  
in this profound mystery of Christmas.  
Put into the hearts of men and women this peace  
for which they sometimes seek so desperately  
and which you alone can give to them.  
Help them to know one another better,  
and to live as brothers and sisters,  
children of the same Father.  
Reveal to them also your beauty,  
holiness and purity.  
Awaken in their hearts  
love and gratitude for your infinite goodness.  
Join them all together in your love.  
And give us your heavenly peace. Amen.

*Pope John XXIII*

## DECEMBER 27

Jesu, the Father's only Son,  
whose death for all redemption won,  
before the worlds, of God most high,  
begotten all ineffably.  
The Father's Light and Splendor Thou  
their endless Hope to Thee that bow:  
accept the prayers and praise today  
that through the world Thy servants pay.  
Salvation's author, call to mind  
how, taking the form of humankind,  
born of a Virgin undefiled,  
Thou in man's flesh becamest a Child.  
Thus testifies the present day  
Through every year in long array,  
that Thou, salvation's source alone  
proceedest from the Father's Throne.  
Whence sky, and stars, and sea's abyss,  
and earth, and all that therein is,  
shall still, with laud and carol meet,  
the Author of thine Advent greet.  
And we who, by Thy precious Blood  
from sin redeemed, are marked for God,  
on this, the day that saw Thy Birth,  
sing the new song of ransomed earth.  
All honor, laud, and glory be,  
O Jesu, Virgin-born, to Thee;  
whom with the Father we adore,  
and Holy Ghost forevermore. Amen.

*6th Century Hymn; tr: John Mason Neale*

## DECEMBER 28

Loving Father, Help us remember  
the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and worship of the wise men.  
Close the door of hate and open the door of love  
all over the world. Let kindness come with every  
gift and good desires with every greeting.  
Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ  
brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.  
May the Christmas morning make us happy to  
be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us  
to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and  
forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

*A Christmas Prayer by Robert Louis Stevenson*

## DECEMBER 29

Come, Sun and Savior, to embrace Our gloomy  
world,  
its weary race,  
As groom to bride, as bride to groom:  
The wedding chamber, Mary's womb.  
At your great Name, O Jesus, now  
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;  
All things on earth with one accord,  
Like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.  
Come in your holy might, we pray,  
Redeem us for eternal day;  
Defend us while we dwell below,  
From all assaults of our dread foe.

*Advent Evening Hymn (8th Century)*

# WEEK 6

*For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever, Amen*

## SILENCE

Begin by sitting in complete silence for a few minutes. Become aware that you are a created being. You are body and soul. Become aware that God is present with you.

## PSALM OF THE WEEK | PSALM 90

Lord, you have been our dwelling place, in all generations.  
Before the mountains were brought forth  
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
    from everlasting to everlasting you are God.  
You return man to dust and say, "Return, O children of man!"  
For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past,  
    or as a watch in the night.

You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream,  
    like grass that is renewed in the morning; in the morning it flourishes and is  
renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.  
For we are brought to an end by your anger; by your wrath we are dismayed  
You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence  
For all our days pass away under your wrath;  
    we bring our years to an end like a sigh.  
The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty;  
yet their span is but toil and trouble;  
    they are soon gone, and we fly away; Who considers the power of your anger,  
and your wrath according to the fear of you?

So teach us to number our days  
    that we may get a heart of wisdom.  
Return, O Lord! How long? Have pity on your servants!  
Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,  
    that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.  
Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,  
    and for as many years as we have seen evil.  
Let your work be shown to your servants,  
    and your glorious power to their children.  
Let the favor[d] of the Lord our God be upon us,  
    and establish the work of our hands upon us;  
    yes, establish the work of our hands!

*Every day when you read this psalm, underline or highlight phrases that stand out to you. Why is your soul drawn to this? Feel free to write in the margins.*

## DECEMBER 30

You are our eternal salvation,  
The unfailing light of the world.  
Light everlasting,  
You are truly our redemption.  
Grieving that the human race was perishing  
through the tempter's power,  
without leaving the heights  
You came to the depths in your loving kindness.  
Readily taking our humanity by  
Your gracious will,  
You saved all earthly creatures, long since lost,  
Restoring joy to the world.  
Redeem our souls and bodies, O Christ,  
and so possess us as Your shining dwellings.  
By Your first coming, make us righteous;  
At your second coming, set us free:  
So that, when the world is filled with light  
and you judge all things,  
We may be clad in spotless robes  
and follow in Your steps, O King,  
Into the heavenly hall.

*Unknown Author, 10th century*

## DECEMBER 31

Thy goodness has been with me another year,  
leading me through a twisting wilderness,  
in retreat helping me to advance,  
when beaten back making sure headway.  
Thy goodness will be with me in the year ahead;  
I hoist sail and draw up anchor,  
With thee as the blessed pilot of my future as of  
my past.  
I bless thee that thou hast veiled my eyes to the  
waters ahead...  
If I am to die,  
I shall see thy face the sooner;  
If a painful end is to be my lot,  
grant me grace that my faith fail not;  
If I am to be cast aside from the service I love,  
I can make no stipulation;  
Only glorify thyself in me whether in comfort or  
trial,  
as a chosen vessel meet always for thy use.

## JANUARY 1

Our Father and our God, as we stand at the  
beginning of this new year  
we confess our need of Your presence and Your  
guidance as we face the future.  
We each have our hopes and expectations for  
the year that is ahead of us—  
but You alone know what it holds for us,  
and only You can give us the strength and the  
wisdom we will need  
to meet its challenges....  
In the midst of life's uncertainties in the days  
ahead,  
assure us of the certainty of Your unchanging  
love.

In the midst of life's inevitable disappointments  
and heartaches,  
help us to turn to You for the stability and  
comfort we will need.  
We pray for our nation and its leaders during  
these difficult times,  
and for all those who are seeking to bring peace  
and justice  
to our dangerous and troubled world...

Bring our divided nation together, and give us a  
greater vision of what  
You would have us to be....  
And so, our Father, we thank You for the promise  
and hope of this new year,  
and we look forward to it with expectancy  
and faith.  
This I ask in the name of our Lord and Savior,  
who by His death and resurrection  
has given us hope both for this world and the  
world to come. Amen.

*From a prayer for the New Year, Billy Graham 2008*

## JANUARY 2

O God, who hast caused this holy night to shine  
with the illumination of the true Light:  
Grant us, we beseech thee,  
that as we have known the mystery of that Light  
upon earth,  
so may we also perfectly enjoy him in heaven;  
where with thee and the Holy Spirit  
he liveth and reigneth, one God,  
in glory everlasting. Amen

*1979 Book of Common Prayer*

## JANUARY 3

God of love, Father of all,  
the darkness that covered the earth  
has given way to the bright dawn of your Word  
made flesh.  
Make us a people of this light.  
Make us faithful to your Word  
that we may bring your life to the waiting world.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL)*

## JANUARY 4

I have trusted thee and thou hast not betrayed  
my trust;  
waited for thee, and not waited in vain.  
Thou wilt come to raise my body from the dust,  
and re-unite it to my soul,  
by a wonderful work of infinite power and love,  
greater than that which bounds the oceans'  
waters,  
ebbs and flows the tides,  
keeps the stars in their courses,  
and gives life to all creatures.  
This corruptible shall put on incorruption,  
this mortal, immortality,  
this dishonoured body, a glorious body,  
this weak body, a body of power.  
I triumph now in thy promises as I shall do  
in their performance,  
for the head cannot live if the members are  
dead;  
Beyond the grave is resurrection, judgment,  
acquittal, dominion.

*Valley of Vision, "The Second Coming"*

## JANUARY 5

In love you came to a stable in Bethlehem  
to become one with us.  
In love you walked the plains and hills of Galilee  
and Judea to teach us how to live.  
In love you were nailed on a cross on Calvary  
to bear away our sin.  
In love you rose from a tomb in Joseph's garden  
to defeat death's power over us.  
In love you ascended beyond the clouds  
to be our reigning Lord.  
You came to love us so that we need never feel  
unloved, deserted, alone, condemned.

*Worship Sourcebook, Profession of faith*





**NEW VALLEY**  
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