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# THE CONGREGATION AT PRAYER

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer*

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*The Week of the Fourth Sunday in Advent—Rorate Coeli—Heavens Come Down!*

*December 19-25, 2016*

## 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. If able, the head of the home should take the role of "Leader" (L) and the family the role of "Group" (G). The whole family should try to learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.*

**Theme: He Is Our Redeemer Kinsman!**

**Catechesis Notes for the Week—The Genealogy of Jesus**—"The first thing to be noted in the lineage of Christ is the fact that the evangelist (Matthew 1:1-17) lists in it four women who are very notorious in Scripture: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba. But nothing is said about the women of good repute: Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachel. Now [some early church writers] have been concerned about the reason why this was done. I hold that the first group was mentioned because these women were sinners and that Christ also wanted to be born into that large family in which prostitutes and fornicators are found in order to indicate what a love He bore [for] sinners. For the holier real holiness is, the closer it draws to sinners. This, then, is the reason why He thrusts and sticks Himself into a family of sinners and is not ashamed of them, nay, lets them stand in the catalog of His ancestry and lets them be sung at that altar before all the world. Had Christ been a Pharisee, He would not have boasted very much of them; nay, they would have had an evil odor to Him, and He would have turned up His nose at them. But because He was holy, [sinners], too, had to be listed among His [ancestors]." —Martin Luther

### INVOCATION

*The sign of the cross ✙ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.<sup>1</sup>*

**L** In the name of the Father, and of the Son ✙, and of the Holy Spirit.

**G** Amen.

### APOSTLES' CREED

### VERSE

*Isaiah 9:6*

**G** For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

### DAILY PSALM

*The leader may read the appointed Psalm for the day. If applicable, members of the family may take turns reading the Psalm for the Day.*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	24	122	33	50	18:1-20	102	90

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the Triune God and the sign of the cross reminds worshipers of their baptisms. Martin Luther wrote in his Small Catechism, "In the morning when you get up, make the sign of the holy cross and say, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'"



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Evening	25,110	40,67	85,91	14,16	126,62	130,16	80,72

## PSALM PRAYER

**L** Merciful Father, our Gracious God, You would have us make known to You our requests by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. We beseech You, give us Your peace which surpasses all understanding. Prepare and adorn our hearts to be the holy habitation of Your Son, that we may receive Him with joy, abide in blessed communion with Him, and continually praise You with songs of gladness; through the same Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**G** Amen.

## THE CATECHISM: THE CREED

*The Second Article*

<b>L</b> What is the Second Article?	
<b>C</b> I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.	<i>Preschool +</i>
<b>L</b> What does this mean?	
<b>C</b> I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.	<i>First Grade +</i>
<b>C</b> He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.  All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.  This is most certainly true.	<i>Second Grade +</i>
<b>L</b> What is the Second Article?	
<b>C</b> I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.	<i>Preschool +</i>

### Prayer on the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed:

*Heavenly Father, You have given us Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary to redeem us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried, taking all of the punishment that we deserved for our sin upon Himself. He descended into hell, proclaiming His victory over the devil; and on the third day He rose again from the dead, preaching the forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life in His name to the whole world. We give thanks to You for all that Your Son has done for us. Help us to know and believe in Jesus. He has now ascended into heaven and sits at Your right hand as our Savior and*

*Lord. All the enemies of sin, death, and hell have been placed under His feet and He now rules over all things for the sake of His Church. Give us fervent faith in Jesus and the blessed hope that He will come again to judge the living and the dead, giving the gift of eternal salvation to all who believe in Him; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

## DAILY READINGS

*In 2016, we will be working through a Harmony of the Four Gospels, following Jesus' birth, life, and death chronologically as the Gospels present it.*

	Weekly Scripture Readings*		Through the Confessions in One Year
	Old Testament	New Testament	
<b>Monday</b>	Isaiah 40:1-17	Revelation 7:1-17	Augsburg Confession [AC] XXIV:1-41
<b>Tuesday</b>	Isaiah 40:18–41:10	Revelation 8:1-13	AC XXV:1-13
<b>Wednesday</b>	Isaiah 42:1-25	Revelation 9:1-12	AC XXVI:1-20
<b>Thursday</b>	Isaiah 43:1-24	Revelation 9:13-10:11	AC XXVI:21-45
<b>Friday</b>	Isaiah 43:25–44:20	Revelation 11:1-19	AC XXVII:1-26
<b>Saturday</b>	Isaiah 44:21–45:13, 20-25	Revelation 12:1-17	-----
<b>Sunday</b>	Isaiah 49:1-18	Matthew 1:1-17	-----

## PRAYERS

*Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent:*

**L** 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.

**G** Amen.

## Daily Themes for Prayer

*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.*

*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.*

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

*Our District President, Pr. Phil Hirsch and his family, after their house caught on fire.*

*Our shut-ins, that they may be comforted in their loneliness by your gracious presence.*

*Dee Scott, Roland Adelung, George Scott, Shauna Reinsch, Mia Hernandez, Tom Hansen, and Tanya Scherling, as they celebrate their birthdays this week.*

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**G** 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.

### **LUTHER'S MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER**

#### ***Morning***

**G** In the name of the Father, and of the Son (☩), and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

#### ***Evening***

**G** In the name of the Father, and of the Son (☩), and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> Luther, in his *Small Catechism*, encourages Christians who pray the Morning and Evening prayers: "In the morning when you get up and in the evening when you go to bed, make the sign of the holy cross over your head and heart and say, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son (☩), and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.'"

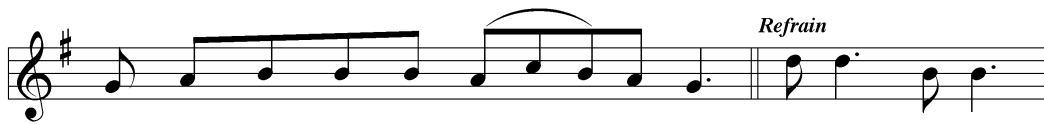
# 23 Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som cap - tive  
 2 Oh, come, O Root of Jes - se, free Your own from Sa - tan's  
 3 Oh, come, O Day-spring from on high, And cheer us by your  
 4 Oh, come, O Key of Da - vid, come, And o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
 tyr - an - ny; From depths of hell your peo - ple save,  
 draw - ing nigh; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,  
 heav'n - ly home. Make safe the way that leads on high,



Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 And bring them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re-joice! Re-joice!  
 And death's dark shad - ows put to flight.  
 And close the path to mis - er - y.



Em - man - u - el Shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Latin hymn, c. 12th century, abr.; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–66, alt.

Tune: VENI, EMMANUEL (LM with Refrain) Plainsong melody, 15th century, alt.