

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

First Sunday After Christmas (The Feast of the Holy Innocents)

December 28-January 3, 2008

The Church Calendar

January 1 – The Circumcision of Christ

On January 1st, we celebrate the Circumcision of Christ. Since we are more squeamish than our ancestors, modern calendars often list it as the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, but the other emphasis is the older. Every Jewish boy was circumcised (and formally named) on the eighth day of his life, and so, one week after Christmas, we celebrate the occasion when Our Lord first shed His blood for us. It is a fit close for a week of martyrs, and reminds us that to suffer for Christ is to suffer with Him.

Collect: Almighty God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit; that, our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Taken from James Keifer's Hagiographies)

The Daily Office

V: O Lord, open my lips;

R: and my mouth will declare your praise

V: Make haste, O God, to + deliver me;

R: make haste to help me, O Lord.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever, world without end.

Amen.

The Readings (Sunday-Saturday)

	Psalmody	Old Testament	New Testament
Sun	9:11-14	Isaiah 52:13-54:10	Matthew 2:13-23
Mon	78:1-7	Isaiah 55:1-13	Luke 1:1-25
Tue	89:1-18	Isaiah 58:1-59:3,14-21	Luke 1:26-38
Wed	111:1-10	Isaiah 60:1-22	Luke 1:39-56
Thu	113	Isaiah 61:1-11	Luke 1:57-80
Fri	62:5-12	Isaiah 62:1-12	Luke 2:1-20
Sat	108:1-13	Isaiah 63:1-14	Luke 2:21-40

Optional: Large Catechism I 253-333

The Catechism

The Creed – The Second Article

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.

What does this mean?

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, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me 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, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

This is most certainly true.

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.** Lord, have mercy.

The Lord's Prayer (prayed together)

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.

The Creed (confessed by all)

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.

The Litany

V: O Lord, hear my prayer.

R: And let my cry come to You.

V: In the day of my trouble I call to you

R: For You answer me.

V: Hide Your face from my sins.

R: And blot out all my iniquity.

V: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

R: And renew a right spirit within me.

V: Do not cast me away from Your presence.

R: And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

V: Restore to me the joy of your salvation.

R: And uphold me with a willing Spirit.

V: Because Your lovingkindness is better than life.

R: My lips shall praise You

V: Because You have been my help.

R: Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.

V: Teach me Your way, O Lord, and I will walk in Your truth.

R: Give me an undivided heart that I may fear Your name.

V: I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart.

R: I will glorify Your name forever.

V: May all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You.

R: May those who love Your salvation always say, Let God be exalted.

V: Save Your people and bless Your inheritance.

R: Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

V: Hear my prayer, O Lord.

R: Listen to my cry for mercy.

The Collect

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the new birth of Thine only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free, who are held in the old bondage under the yoke of sin; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liiveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

In our prayers: Pastor, Richard Eaches, Jackie Caudill, Doug Thomas, Sam Cooper, Rev. Leonard Riddle

Luther's Evening Prayer (prayed together)

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 wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

V: Let us bless the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.

V: The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, + and bring us to everlasting life.

R: Amen.