

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

Populus Zion - Second Sunday of Advent

December 7-13, 2008

The Church Calendar

December 7 – Ambrose of Milan, *Bishop and Doctor*

Ambrose was governor of Northern Italy, with capital at Milan. When the see of Milan fell vacant, it seemed likely that rioting would result, since the city was evenly divided between Arians and Athanasians. Ambrose went to the meeting where the election was to take place, and appealed to the crowd for order and good will on both sides. He ended up being elected bishop with the support of both sides. He gave away his wealth, and lived in simplicity.

Ambrose was largely responsible for the conversion of St. Augustine. The hymn *Te Deum Laudamus* ("We praise Thee, O God") was long thought to have been composed by Ambrose in thanksgiving for that conversion. The current opinion is that Ambrose did not write it, but that he may well have written the Creed known as the Athanasian Creed. He is perhaps the first writer of Christian hymns with rhyme and (accentual) meter, and northern Italy still uses his style of plainchant, known as Ambrosian chant, rather than the more widespread Gregorian chant.

Ambrose is regarded as one of the Eight Great Doctors (=Teachers) of the Undivided Church. The list includes four Latin (Western) Doctors (Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Pope Gregory the Great), and four Greek (Eastern) Doctors (Athanasius, John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, and Gregory of Nazianzus).

Collect: O God, who didst give to thy servant Ambrose grace eloquently to declare thy righteousness in the great congregation, and fearlessly to bear reproach for the honor of thy Name: Mercifully grant to all bishops and pastors such excellency in preaching, and fidelity in ministering thy Word, that thy people may be partakers with them of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

(Taken from James Kiefer's Christian Biographies)

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	25:1-7	Isaiah 24:1-13	1 John 1:1-2:14
Mon	11	Isaiah 24:14-25:12	1 John 2:15-29
Tue	17:6-15	Isaiah 26:1-19	1 John 3:1-24
Wed	86:1-7	Isaiah 26:20-27:13	1 John 4:1-21
Thu	5:1-8	Isaiah 28:14-29	1 John 5:1-21
Fri	106:1-5	Isaiah 29:1-14	Jude 1-25
Sat	89:20-29	Isaiah 29:15-30:14	Revelation 1:1-20

Optional: Large Catechism Preface-1:49-111

The Catechism

The Ten Commandments

7. You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

8. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

Kyrie

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

Hymn

LW22 Come, O Long Expected Jesus

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

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Thine only-begotten Son, so that by His coming we may be enabled to serve Thee with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth 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.