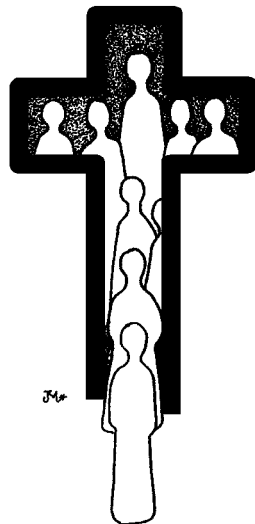


# Prayer with the Sunday Readings

for individuals and small groups

**Advent 2008**



***Keep Watch***  
**First Sunday of Advent**  
**November 30, 2008**

***Invitation to Prayer***

Leader: Lord God, as we enter into a new liturgical year, help us to watch for you. Give us the eyes of faith that we may follow in your path. Bless our conversation today and may all we do be pleasing to you. This we ask in the Holy Name of Jesus.

All: Amen

***Scripture Reading: Mark 13:33-37***

Jesus said to his disciples:

"But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come.

It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch.

Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.

What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'"

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

***Silent Reflection***

***Questions for Faith Sharing***

1. When we sleep we are cut off from the rest of the world. Our eyes are closed to the needs of others. Perhaps this is why the metaphor of sleep is seen in a negative way within this passage. How is God calling you out of sleep, out of passivity, to awaken your faith to serve God and others?
2. What are some of the challenges to stay watchful?

3. How is God using this passage of scripture to help you to grow in your faith?
2. How is God using this passage of scripture to help our parish to grow in faith?

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: For our local Church, may we be attentive to the voice of God, we pray to the Lord.

**All: Awaken us, Lord.**

Leader: For an increase in vocations to the priesthood, religious life, and lay ecclesial ministry, we pray to the Lord.

**All: Awaken us, Lord.**

Leader: For each of us, as we enter into the Advent season, that this will be a time of drawing closer to Christ, we pray to the Lord.

**All: Awaken us, Lord.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...  
(When all who choose are finished offering prayers) For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts.

**All: Awaken us, Lord.**

### *Closing Prayer*

**All: Our Father . . .**

Leader: Go in peace  
+in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**



***Comfort, Give Comfort to My People***  
**Second Sunday of Advent**  
**December 7, 2008**



***Invitation to Prayer***

Leader: Lord God, you have said through your prophet Isaiah,  
“*Comfort, give comfort to my people.*”  
Help us both to experience and to minister that comfort in your name.  
This we ask through Jesus Christ, who is our Peace and our Comfort.

**All: Amen.**

***Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11***

Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the Lord double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: in the desert prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!

Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all humankind shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Go up onto a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings; cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news! Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God!

Here comes, with power, the Lord God, who rules by his strong arm; here is his reward with him, his recompense before him.

Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### *Silent Reflection*

### *Questions for Faith Sharing*

1. How and when do you experience the gift of God's comfort in your life?
2. Within the celebration of the sacraments how do you receive God's comfort?
3. How does our parish family extend God's comfort to others?

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: For all who bring comfort to those who are sick, may they be blessed, we pray,  
**All: Send us your comfort, Lord.**

Leader: For all ministers of Jesus Christ, that as they offer comfort to us they too may be comforted by God, we pray,  
**All: Send us your comfort, Lord.**

Leader: For those who are experiencing any distress and persecution, that the comfort of God will be shown to them, we pray,  
**All: Send us your comfort, Lord.**

Leader: For what else shall we pray...  
(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts,  
**All: Send us your comfort, Lord.**

### *Closing Prayer*

Leader: The child Jesus, experienced comfort and love while being held in the arms of Mary, his mother, and so we pray,

**All: Hail Mary. . .**

**+In the name of the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

***Pray Without Ceasing***  
**Third Sunday of Advent**  
**December 14, 2008**

***Invitation to Prayer***

**Leader:** Gracious God, your son Jesus taught us how to pray. Through the gift of your Spirit, guide our prayer. May this time of prayer and conversation bring us closer to you and help us to understand better your will for our church. This we ask in the holy name of Jesus.

**All:** Amen.

***Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24***

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil. May the God of peace, himself, make you perfectly holy and may you, entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***Silent Reflection***

***Questions for Faith Sharing***

*If we are going to pray at all times, we can't continually be on our knees. Prayer is not only a posture, but also an attentive and open spirit. Given that, consider the following questions:*

1. When do you find time to pray?
2. What is the effect of your prayer time?
3. When do you find it difficult to pray? Do you think it is even possible to pray at those times?



### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: The Holy Spirit guides our prayer; Let us turn to the Advocate in our need:

Leader: When we are distracted in our prayer, we turn to you.

**All: Holy Spirit, bless our prayer.**

Leader: In planning our liturgies, we turn to you.

**All: Holy Spirit, bless our prayer.**

Leader: As we teach our children to know God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--we turn to you.

**All: Holy Spirit, bless our prayer.**

Leader: For the sick, we turn to you.

**All: Holy Spirit, bless our prayer.**

Leader: For those who do not know how to pray, we turn to you.

**All: Holy Spirit, bless our prayer.**

Leader: For other prayers we now mention...  
(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
We turn to you.

**All: Holy Spirit, bless our prayer.**

### *Closing Prayer*

**All: Our Father . . .**

Leader: Go in peace + in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**

*I Will Serve the Lord*  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
**December 21, 2008**

*Invitation to Prayer*

Leader: God our Father, you sent your angel to Nazareth to reveal to Mary your plan for salvation. Send your Spirit into our hearts that everything we do may make Jesus known. May his concern be our concern, and his love for the poor be our love for the poor. In this we will follow the example of Mary, his mother and ours. This we ask in the holy name of Jesus.

All: Amen.

*Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38*

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."

But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

"And, behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God."

Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



### *Silent Reflection*

### *Questions for Faith Sharing*

1. When she is visited by Gabriel and told that she will give birth to Jesus, Mary has one question, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" What questions did you have before you began your ministry, your vocation in your family, church, school, or work? How have your questions been answered?
2. In the living of your vocation and your ministry, what can you learn from Our Lady's example as found in this passage?

### *Intercessory Prayers*

Leader: For all those seeking to discover their vocation or God's will at this time of their lives, we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Please offer any other needs so that we may pray for them...  
(When all who choose are finished offering prayers)  
For these prayers and all those we hold deep in our hearts...

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

### *Closing Prayer*

**All: God our Father, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of your Son, help us to remember that he is our life and our peace. Bless our preparations and strengthen our faith that he may be born through our gestures of love. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**