

# CONFESSING CHRIST - DAILY LECTIONARY AND PRAYERS

Advent and Christmas and the New Year 2013-2014

Frederick R. Frost and Colleen Darling, Editors

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"I was glad when they said to me: 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

(Psalm 122:1)

First Sunday in Advent, 12/01	Isaiah 2:1-5	Theodore Fritsch North Chatham, MA
Monday, 12/02	Isaiah 40:1-11 +1980 Maura Clark +1980 Jean Donovan +1980 Ita Ford +1980 Dorothy Kazel	Michael A. Frost Kresgeville, PA
Tuesday, 12/03	1 Peter 1:2-9	P. V. George Syracuse, NY
Wednesday, 12/04	Psalm 122 +306 Saint Barbara	Milton E. Gockley, Jr. Lancaster, PA
Thursday, 12/05	Luke 1:67-79 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott +1791 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Peter Goguts Robesonia, PA
Friday, 12/06	Isaiah 40:26-31 +Saint Nicholas	Gerald Goldsworthy Mount Prospect, IL
Saturday, 12/07	Isaiah 41:8-13 1965 Gaudium et Spes	Charlotte P. Gosselink Kenneth Square, PA

"Come, thou long-expected Jesus,  
Born to set your people free;  
From our fears and sins release us;  
Let us find our rest in thee."

Second Sunday in Advent, 12/08	Matthew 3:1-12 +1691 Richard Baxter +1977 Sr. Alice Domon (Disappeared, Argentina, Mothers of May Square)	Stephen & Susan Gould Elkhart Lake, WI
Monday, 12/09	Isaiah 11:1-10	Kathryn Greene-McCreight New Haven, CT
Tuesday, 12/10	Psalms 80:1-7 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1968 Karl Barth 1977 Sr. Leonie Duquet (Disappeared Argentina, Mothers of May Square)	Christa Gregel Berlin, Germany
Wednesday, 12/11	Isaiah 43:1-2	Reinhard Groscurth Bremen, Germany
Thursday, 12/12	Isaiah 43:18-21	Ruben Grosshuesch Sheboygan, WI
Friday, 12/13	Isaiah 44:1-4	Linda Gruber Phoenixville, PA
Saturday, 12/14	Isaiah 44:21-23	Robert Hamilton Elkhart Lake, WI
	“Israel's Strength and Consolation, Hope of all the earth thou art, Long desired of every nation, Joy of every waiting heart”.	
Third Sunday in Advent, 12/15	Luke 1:47-55 1791 Bill of Rights	Joanne Hartunian Belmont, MA
Monday, 12/16	Isaiah 61:1-3	Esther Haskell Claremont, MA
Tuesday, 12/17	Isaiah 61:10-11	Philip Haslanger Madison, WI

Wednesday, 12/18	Isaiah 45:20-23 1865 Abolition of Slavery (U.S.) *1946 Steven Bantu Biko	Steven Hecky Menomonee Falls, WI
Thursday, 12/19	Matthew 11:2-11 +220 Clement of Alexandria	Kim & Fay Henning Two Rivers, WI
Friday, 12/20	James 5:7-10	Ramon Hernandez Madison, WI
Saturday, 12/21	Isaiah 35:1-10  "Born all people to deliver, Born a child, you came to reign! Born to rule on earth forever, Come, be known to us again."	Kristin Herzog Durham, NC
Fourth Sunday in Advent, 12/22	Matthew 1:18-25	Ralph E. Houseman Grafton, WI
Monday, 12/23	Romans 1:1-7	Robert E. Howell Walnut Creek, CA
Christmas Eve, 12/24	Luke 2:1-14	Robert G. Hunsicker Lancaster, PA
Christmas Day, 12/25	Luke 2:15-20	Joan Hunt Weston, MA
Thursday, 12/26	Psalms 97:6-9 Day of Saint Stephen, Martyr	Dorothy Hutch Branford, CT
Friday, 12/27	Psalms 98:1-3 Day of Saint John the Evangelist	Steven Jaberg West Bend, WI
Saturday, 12/28	Psalms 98:4-9 Day of Holly Innocents, Martyrs	J. Charles Janes Cadillac, MI
First Sunday after Christmas, 12/29	Isaiah 63:7-9	Clifford J. Janssen St. Louis, MO
Monday, 12/30	Psalms 148 +1968 Hans Asmussen	Laverne R. Joseph Long Beach, CA

Tuesday, 12/31  
New Year's Eve

Psalm 8  
1915 Fellowship of Reconciliation

Harvey Kandler  
Kaukauna, WI

"We ask you for a new beginning  
Help us to go and sin no more,  
That by your grace we will be winning  
The battle saints have fought before.  
Till you greet us at heaven's door,  
And we will measure time no more."

Wednesday, 1/01/14  
New Year's Day

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13  
\*1484 Huldreich Zwingli  
1863 Emancipation Proclamation  
Day of Prayer for Peace

Robert E. Kasper  
Elgin, IL

"How can our lives reflect God's glory?  
A question answered long ago.  
First, love the Lord, proclaim God's story.  
Struggle, in faith, in God to grow.  
Then serve each other well and true.  
Respond to what God's done for you."

Thursday, 1/02/14

Revelation 21:1-6

Christoph Keienburg  
Paderborn, Germany

Friday, 1/03/14

Romans 1:1-7

William Kesting  
Cleveland, WI

Saturday, 1/04/14

Romans 1:8-17

Ray F. Kibler  
Claremont, CA

The Second Sunday after Christmas, 1/05/14

John 1:1-18

Russell Kimmerly  
Harrison, OH

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## PRAYERS AND RESOURCES FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR (2013-2014)

Bright mornin' stars are risin', Bright mornin' stars are risin',  
Bright morning' stars are risin', Day is a-breakin' in my soul.

Oh where are our dear fathers? Oh where are our dear mothers?

Oh where are sisters and brothers? Day is a-breakin' in my soul.

Some are down in the valley prayin', Some are deep in the mountain sleepin',  
Some are up in heaven shoutin', Day is a-breakin' in my soul.

(Appalachian Folk Hymn)

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Light of Lights!  
Light of lights! All gloom dispelling,  
Thou didst come to make thy dwelling  
Here within our world of sight.  
Lord, in pity and in power,  
Thou didst in our darkest hour  
Rend the clouds and show thy light.

Praise to thee in earth and heaven  
Now and evermore be given,  
Christ, who art our sun and shield.  
Lord, for us thy life thou gavest,  
Those who trust in thee thou savest,  
All thy mercy stands revealed.

(Saint Thomas Aquinas, @1225-1274)

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### A Prayer in Advent

Lord Jesus, come into our hearts, and so cleanse them that we, being pure in heart, may see God,... Come into our minds, and so enlighten and illumine them that we may know you who are the way, the truth, the life. Touch our lips, that we may speak no word that would hurt another or grieve you. Touch our eyes, that they may never linger on any forbidden thing. Touch our hands, that they may become lovely with service to the needs of others. Come when we are sad, to comfort us; when we are tired, to refresh us; when we are lonely, to cheer us; when we are tempted, to strengthen us; when we are perplexed, to guide us; when we are happy, to make our joy doubly dear... Help us to live so that, whenever your call comes for us, at morning, at midday or at evening, it may find us ready, our work completed, and our hearts at peace with you, so that we may enter at last with joy into your nearer presence and into life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(William Barclay in Prayers for the Christian Year, Harper Chapel Book, 1965)

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## Time to Read, Time to Study

I feel that all families should have the conveniences and comforts which modern living brings and which do simplify life, and give time to read, to study, to think, and to pray. And to work in the apostolate, too. But poverty is my vocation, to live as simply and poorly as I can, and never to cease talking and writing of poverty and destitution. Here and everywhere. "While there are poor, I am of them. While there are those in prison, I am not free,..."

The world would become better off  
If people tried to become better.  
And people would become better  
If thy stopped trying to become better off.

(Dorothy Day, 1897-1980)

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## The Lowly Manger

He found humanity reduced to the level of the beasts. Therefore he is placed like feed in a manger, that we, having left behind our carnal desires, might rise up to that degree of intelligence which befits human nature. Whereas we were brutish in soul, by now approaching the manger, yes, his table, we find no longer feed, but the bread from heaven, which is the body of life...

(Cyril of Alexandria, +444 A.D., Homily I)

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## The Humble Child

He was a baby and a child, so that you may be a perfect human. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes, so that you may be freed from the snares of death. He was in a manger, so that you may be in the altar. He was on earth that you may be in the stars. He had no other place in the inn, so that you may have many mansions in the heavens. "He, being rich, became poor for your sakes, that through his poverty you might be rich." Therefore, his poverty is our inheritance, and the Lord's weakness is our virtue. He chose to lack for himself, that he may abound for all. The sobs of that appalling infancy cleanse me, those tears wash away my sins... You see that he is in swaddling clothes. You do not see that he is in heaven. You hear the cries of an infant, but you do not hear the lowing of an ox recognizing its Master, for the ox knows his Owner and the donkey his Master's crib.

(Saint Ambrose, "Exposition of the Gospel of Luke 2:41-42")

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## A Christmas Prayer

Dear God, we remember at this Christmas time how the eternal Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We thank you that Jesus took our human body upon him, so that we can never again dare to despise or neglect or misuse the body, since you made it your dwelling place. We thank you that Jesus did a day's work like any working-person, that he knew the problem of living together in a family, that he knew the frustration and irritation of serving the public, that he had to earn a living, and to face all the wearing routine of everyday work and life and living, and so clothed each common task with glory... We thank you that he too had to bear unfair criticism, prejudiced opposition, malicious and deliberate misunderstanding. We thank you that whatever happens to us, he has been there before, and that, because he himself has gone through things, he is able to help those who are going through them...

(William Barclay in Prayers for the Christian Year)

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## Break Your Bread

Consider what is said to you: "Love God." If you say to me: "Show me whom I am to love," what shall I say if not what Saint John says: "No one has ever seen God!" But in case you should think that you are completely cut off from the sight of God, he says: "God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God." Love your neighbor, then, and see within yourself the power by which you love your neighbor; there you will see God, as far as you are able. Begin, then, to love your neighbor. Break your bread to feed the hungry, and bring into you home the homeless poor; if you see someone naked, clothe that one, and do not look down on your own flesh and blood. What will you gain by doing this? Your light will then burst forth like the dawn... In loving and caring for your neighbor, you are on a journey. Where are you traveling if not to the Lord God?... We have not yet reached God's presence, but we have our neighbor by our side. Support, then, this companion of your pilgrimage if you want to come into the presence of the One with whom you desire to remain forever...

(Saint Augustine, 354-430)

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## Mosaic of the Nativity: Serbia, Winter, 1993

On the domed ceiling God is thinking:  
I made them my joy, and everything else I created  
I made to bless them.  
But see what they do!  
I know their hearts and arguments:

"We're descended from Cain.  
Evil is nothing new, so what does it matter now  
if we shell the infirmity,

and the well where the fearful  
and rash alike must come for water?"

God thinks Mary into being.  
Suspended at the apogee of the golden dome,  
She curls in a brown pod,  
and inside her the mind of Christ,  
cloaked in blood, lodges and begins to grow.

(Jane Kenyon in Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas,  
Plough Publishing House, 2001)

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### With God Dwells Joy

If the earth has been found worthy to bear the human being Jesus Christ,  
If a person like Jesus has lived, then and only then does our human life make sense.

With God dwells joy and down from God it comes,  
Seizing mind, soul and body;  
And where this joy has grasped a human being it spreads,  
It carries away, it bursts through closed doors.

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1906-1945)

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### A Prayer for the New Year

You who hold all the ages in your hands,  
to whom a thousand years are as a day,  
forgive us for our waste of time,  
of days that vanished with out a trace,  
of hours that slipped away unlived,  
of glory unseen, of joy unfelt,  
of all the heights and depths in life  
from which our blindness  
and our sloth barred us.  
Born of the flesh and living in it,  
time works its will in us;  
the past haunts us with shadows we did not fulfill,  
and our future lures us with hopes too often unreal.

When the seed you have sown falls upon our souls,  
 grant that we may have depth enough  
 to nurture it in time  
 to bring forth its true harvest.

This day which you have given us  
 Is the house of our peace  
 and the earnest of our hope for years to come.

(Samuel H. Miller in "Prayers for Daily Use",  
 New York, Harper & Brothers, 1957)

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Your Years Have No End

O Lord, our loving God, we thank you that you remain the same and that your years have no end; that it is your will and your gift to grant us to remain; that your word remains, in which your heart is manifest to us and which speaks to our hearts. Give us the freedom, where all else decays, to hold to it and it alone....

(Karl Barth, 1886-1968)

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You are invited to refer to the Confessing Christ website at the following address: <http://confessingchrist.net>  
 Confessing Christ materials are being prepared at the Mission House Center, Lakeland College. Those no longer wishing to receive materials or those with address changes should contact Colleen Darling, Lakeland College, P.O. Box 359, Sheboygan, WI 53082-0359, by e-mail [darlingca@lakeland.edu](mailto:darlingca@lakeland.edu) or by calling 920-565-1538.

"For no one can lay foundation other than the one that has been laid: that foundation is Jesus Christ."  
 (1 Cor. 3:11, NRSV)