

1st SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

The boy Jesus increased in wisdom, and in divine and human favor



Dwell in Us

God our Father,
you astound us
with life-giving forgiveness.
We are thankful for your gift of peace
and the example of the Holy Family.

Hear our prayer:
Open our hearts.
Help us to dedicate ourselves to you
and to love one another.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 29, 2024

Put on Love



*Today's readings: 1 Samuel 1:20–28; Psalm 84: 2–10;
Colossians 3:12–21; Luke 2:41–52.*

As a faithful Jewish family, Joseph and Mary traveled with twelve-year-old Jesus to Jerusalem for Passover. A day into their return to Nazareth, the couple realize that Jesus was not in their caravan. They are filled with anxiety as they make the long trek back to Jerusalem in search of Jesus. The parents find their son engaging in thought-provoking conversations with teachers—something that astounds those in the temple. Though Mary and Joseph do not fully understand Jesus' actions, we hear that Mary “kept all these things in her heart.”

We see the holy family striving for holiness in family life and inspire the community of loved ones that surrounds us and our families. Prayer and dedication to the Lord bears much fruit for future generations; we are advised to honor and revere our parents and older generations. To grow in love for others, we remember the importance of letting “the word of Christ dwell” in us. The day invites us to honor, forgive, be patient with one another. Every day this week, commit to one act of service for someone in your family or community that demonstrates putting “on love, that is, the bond of perfection.”



This Week at Home

Monday, December 30

Twelve days of Christmas

The octave of Christmas begins on Christmas Day and ends on January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. An octave is an eight-day feast, or period of celebration. Two of the most important times in the liturgical calendar are the Octave of Easter and that of Christmas. The celebration and joy experienced on Christmas Day carries through the octave of Christmas as we are invited to continue to reflect on the glory of the season. If you are able, attend Mass to continue your celebration of Christmas. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:12–17; Psalm 96:7–8a, 8b–9, 10; Luke 2:36–40.*

Tuesday, December 31

True light

Today's gospel is the prologue to the Gospel of John. It highlights many themes that emerge throughout the Gospel, including light and life: "What came to be through him was life, / and this life was the light of the human race; / the light shines in the darkness, / and the darkness has not overcome it." How can you testify to the true light, to Jesus Christ, who enlightens us? With someone you love, share how Christ enlightens you. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:18–21; Psalm 96:1–13; John 1:1–18.*

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Name of Jesus

Today we remember and honor the Name of Jesus. What name or title of Jesus from Scripture stands out to you (for example, Teacher, Prince of Peace, Preacher, Messiah, Savior)? Pray with the most salient one and reflect upon its meaning for you. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:29–3:6; Psalm 98:1–6; John 1:29–34.*

Thursday, January 2

Remain in him

In today's first reading, John stresses the unity of the Father and Son, stating, "Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father." Then the apostle reassures followers in their faith: "Let what you heard

from the beginning remain in you." Many prepare to return to work today after the holiday festivities. How can you let the joy of Christmas remain in you? Consider starting your days with centering prayer. Return to the sacred word you chose throughout the day so that you can remain in Christ. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:22–28; Psalm 98:1–4; John 1:19–28.*

Friday, January 3

Ponder in your heart

After the birth of Jesus, Mary keeps the shepherd's words about the Christ child, "reflecting on them in her heart." At the turn of the year spend time in silence, reflecting on the season in your heart. The birth of a child can often be a whirlwind for parents, even more so for those who have fled persecution. Say a prayer or, if you are able, send a donation to an organization serving refugee families. *Today's readings: Num 6:22–27; Ps 67:2–8; Gal 4:4–7; Luke 2:16–21.*

Saturday, January 4

Luther's reflections on the birth of Jesus

Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother... What can be sweeter than the Babe, what more lovely than the mother!... Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing. Watch him springing in the lap of the maiden. Laugh with him. Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace... You will see how great is the divine goodness, which seeks above all else that you should not despair. Trust him! Trust him! Here is the Child in whom is salvation. To me there is no greater consolation given to mankind than this, that Christ became man, a child, a babe, playing in the lap and at the breasts of his most gracious mother. Who is there whom this sight would not comfort? Now is overcome the power of sin, death, hell, conscience, and guilt, if you come to judge this gurgling Babe and believe that he is come, not to judge you, but to save. (*Martin Luther's Christmas Book, p. 33*) *Today's readings: 1 John 3:7–10; Psalm 98:1–9; John 1:35–42.*