

Prayers and Blessings at Home

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

January 7, 2018



Scripture Readings

Isaiah 60:1–6

Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 10–11,
12–13 (see 11)

Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6

Matthew 2:1–12

Prayer before the Nativity Scene

Lord our God,
here in a humble stable we see Joseph
and Mary
keeping watch over their newborn son.
We see poor shepherds and animals
whose manger serves as a bed for this baby,
the Christ child:
Mary's son and God's Son,
helpless infant and mighty God.
We are reminded of the happy truth
of Christmas:
"The Word became made flesh and made his
dwelling with us" (John 1:14).
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Examination of Conscience

☉ When I encounter the reality of God taking
on human flesh in the person of the Son,
Jesus Christ, through the Incarnation, how
do I respond to this reality? Do I reject Jesus'
presence in my life, as Herod had done, or do
I accept him into my life like the Magi did?

☉ What are some of my gifts that I can share
with others today?

Did You Know?

. . . that there is a tradition of blessing
homes on Epiphany? The practice involves
praying for God's blessing upon the home and
using chalk to inscribe the following for this
year: 20 + C + M + B + 18. The numbers are
for the year (2018) and the initials stand for
the Latin *Christus mansionem benedicat*,
meaning "Christ bless this house."

Living the Liturgy at Home

Join with your family to bless your home today.
Gather at the threshold of your front door. Begin
by making the Sign of the Cross. Use chalk to
inscribe the following above the door: 20 + C +
M + B + 18

The numbers of the new year mark the beginning
and the end of the inscription. In addition to the
Latin prayer words mentioned above, C + M + B
also stand for the traditional names of the three
wise men who visited baby Jesus: Caspar,
Melchior, and Balthasar. Have someone read
aloud this prayer as the inscription is made
above the door: "May Christ bless this house,
that those who come and go through this door
will enjoy the blessing of Christ. Amen."

Prayers and Blessings at Home

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 14, 2018



Scripture Readings

1 Samuel 3:3b–10, 19
Psalm 40:2, 4, 7–8, 8–9, 10
(8a and 9a)
1 Corinthians 6:13c–15a,
17–20
John 1:35–42

Prayer before the Bible

Living God,
your holy words, spoken long ago to people
far away,
are spoken to us, here and now.
As we listen, fill our hearts with reverence
and our minds with curiosity.
Bring us back to your Word day after day,
in times of joy and sorrow,
in light and darkness,
for “your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105).
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Examination of Conscience

- ☉ Jesus is constantly inviting me to deeper discipleship with him. How do I respond to his invitation? Do I get up and follow him?
- ☉ Do I welcome the faith witness of others so that I myself can welcome the call to discipleship? How open am I to listening to what they have to share?

Did You Know?

. . . a simple fisherman by the name of Simon went on to become known as Peter, one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ? Peter set down his fishing nets and became the “rock” upon whom Jesus built his church. Peter became the leader of the Christian community after Jesus’ Ascension into heaven, and thus, became the first pope of the Church.

Living the Liturgy at Home

In today's Gospel, we hear of Andrew, one of the first disciples to follow Jesus, spending time with Jesus. After this initial meeting, Andrew goes to his brother Simon to share the news that they had found the Messiah. This begins the initial following that will become the Christian Way. This week, throughout the world, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is being celebrated from January 18–25. These eight days comprise an octave of prayer focused on strengthening Christian unity while honoring Christian diversity. Learn more about this week at www.geii.org. Find prayer services being held in your area and attend.



Prayers and Blessings at Home

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 21, 2018

Scripture Readings

Jonah 3:1–5, 10

Psalm 25:4–5, 6–7, 8–9 (4a)

1 Corinthians 7:29–31

Mark 1:14–20

Prayer before the Bible

Living God,
your holy words, spoken long ago to people
far away,
are spoken to us, here and now.
As we listen, fill our hearts with reverence
and our minds with curiosity.
Bring us back to your Word day after day,
in times of joy and sorrow,
in light and darkness,
for “your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105).
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Examination of Conscience

☉ What keeps me from wholeheartedly following Jesus’ call in my life? How can I move these obstacles out of my way so I can go and see where Jesus is calling me to wholeheartedly follow him?

☉ Do I listen and reflect each week on the Gospel to learn more about Christ?

Did You Know?

. . . that the Sea of Galilee is the largest freshwater lake in modern-day Israel? To this day, it remains an important site for commercial fishing, the same industry in which Jesus’ earliest disciples were working when they were called by Jesus. Also known today as the “Kinneret,” it is Israel’s most important source of drinking water.

Living the Liturgy at Home

Being a disciple of Jesus is not always the easiest thing to do in today’s world. Spend some time this week in discussion with your parents and other family members about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. Ask them to share their experiences of being a Christian disciple. Inquire about times when it was difficult to be an authentic disciple of Christ. Ask them what steps they took to refocus upon their own call to discipleship. Share your own experiences of listening and responding to Jesus’ call in your life. Conclude your discussion by strategizing a plan to help hold each other accountable in your discipleship.

Prayers and Blessings at Home

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 28, 2018



Scripture Readings

Deuteronomy 18:15–20

Psalm 95:1–2, 6–7, 7–9 (8)

1 Corinthians 7:32–35

Mark 1:21–28

Prayer before the Bible

Living God,
your holy words, spoken long ago to people
far away,
are spoken to us, here and now.
As we listen, fill our hearts with reverence
and our minds with curiosity.
Bring us back to your Word day after day,
in times of joy and sorrow,
in light and darkness,
for “your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105).
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Examination of Conscience

☉ What are the teachings of Jesus that I find to be absolutely amazing? Why do these teachings speak to me in a profound way?

☉ What are the boundaries in my life that I set up that keep me from fully connecting with other people? How can I open my heart more and transform boundaries into bridges of connection with others?

Did You Know?

. . . that in the Church there are actually priests who, as part of their ministry, are exorcists? Christianity has a long history of ministers of the Church praying over people who were thought to be possessed by unclean spirits. This practice continues today in which each diocese has its own diocesan exorcist who is commissioned by the local bishop.

Living the Liturgy at Home

In this Sunday's Gospel reading, we hear that Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and began to preach with authority. This week, spend some time reading through the Gospels and focus on the times when Jesus was preaching. Light a candle while reading these texts to call to mind that Jesus is the Light of the World. Reflect upon the sermons that you read that Jesus preached. What common threads do you notice in his sermons? Are there common themes that run through the various times he preaches? In reading his sermons, would you say that Jesus preached with authority? Reflect on this.