

LET
US
PRAY

LET US PRAY

A HANDBOOK FOR THE FAMILY
PRAYERS

By
JOSEF IMBERG

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Evangelisk Litteraturmission - Scriptura, Sweden

Publishers:
SCRIPTURA
Evangelical Literature Mission
Gothenburg, Sweden

Fourth edition

**© Judith Imberg 1989
SE-342 31 Alvesta, Sweden**

**Printed by
ToreSäll InfoMedia AB
Vederslöv, Sweden 2007**

**The Bible translation followed, both in direct
quotations and indirectly in prayers, is the
REVISED STANDARD VERSION.**

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FOREWORD

For a number of years STIFTELSEN EVANGELISK LITTERATURMISSION (The Foundation for Evangelical Literature Mission) has been working to provide Lutheran Churches, particularly in Africa, with good handbooks in theology. Another side of its work has been to reach as many Christians as possible in such Churches with booklets on central Christian subjects. Such booklets have been printed and distributed in many issues and in great numbers. They have also been translated into African languages.

From some African quarters we have been asked to provide a kind of prayer-book that could serve as a help or manual in Christian families. Such a book is presented herewith.

I wish to thank the Rev. Axel-Ivar Berglund, Ph.D., Uppsala, SWEDEN, for handing over to me the requests from Africa. My sincere thanks also go to the Rev. Harry Durkee, Hollywood Lutheran Church, and Dr. Arthur L. Henry, Village Lutheran Church, Researcher at Huntington Library, both of Los Angeles, U.S.A., for going over my manuscript and giving me much valuable help, not in the least with regard to the linguistic form of this book.

Together with my fellow-workers of the Foundation I wish and pray that this little book may become a valuable help to many African families in their prayers and devotions.

The Lord said: "ASK, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN YOU; SEEK, AND YOU WILL FIND; KNOCK, AND IT WILL BE OPENED TO YOU." Mt 7:7.

Alvesta, SWEDEN, August 1989.

J.I.

I

THE BIBLE AND OUR PRAYERS

1. What the Word of God means to us

Jesus promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit would lead them by teaching them all things and by bringing to their remembrance all that He had said to them. Jn 14:26.

As human beings we all need the help of the Holy Spirit. He will give us this help by directing us to the Word of God and by explaining it to us. The Word of God is such as to give us knowledge about God and about the way of salvation which is Jesus Christ. He has said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Jn 14:6.

However, *only knowledge* about God is not enough. We also need *faith in God*. This cannot be accomplished without the work of the Holy Spirit. Such faith is created *through the Word of God*.

When the Holy Spirit works with us He also wishes us *to pray*. He is "a spirit of compassion and supplication", i.e. of grace and prayer. Zech 12:10. Therefore, if we remain in God, we will always be praying Christians. Christian life cannot exist without expressing itself in daily prayer.

On the following pages we will try to show how this works, particularly with regard to the family and its devotion and prayers. We will try to show how the Holy Spirit works with us and in us through the Word of God, and how on our side faith and prayer will be needed. When something of this kind is done and is going on, it is always a work accomplished by the Holy Spirit. This is what the apostle means, when he says: "Walk by the Spirit." Gal 5:16.

The holy Scriptures *are* the Word of God. We may understand this better by comparing the Word of God with Jesus Christ. He *was* the Messiah (Christ) already before His coming into this world. He did not *become* the Messiah

by being recognized as such by man. Now it is similar with the Word of God. It does not *become* the Word of God by being accepted by us. It *is* the Word of God already when it is sent out by God. Is 55:11. That is also the reason why we ought to receive it: *It is the Word of God.*

The Word of God is *essential* to us. This means that we need it, really need it. Without the Word of God we cannot know God, nor the way of salvation.

The Word of God is also *clear*. It is not necessary to be a great scholar to understand it. The essential things can be understood by everybody. Jesus has said: "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes." Mt 11:25.

The Word of God is also *sufficient*. This means that it contains all those things we need to be taught sufficiently about God and about the way of salvation.

The Word of God also has *authority* to speak to us and to deal with us in the way God desires it to be done. The authority corresponds to the power needed to perform the work of God. This means that *the Word of God does not contain information or teaching only*. If it did, the Bible would be only a book telling us about certain things. Now it is much more than that. The Word of God has another side which is very important: *it is a means of grace*. By this we want to say that *it is an instrument by which God performs His work in the souls and lives of mankind*.

But how does God work, and what does He accomplish by this work? He works through His Holy Spirit, and this is done in such a way that the Word is applied to the heart and conscience of man. The Holy Spirit directs the Word in such a way that the sins and transgressions are revealed and a need for salvation created. When such a need has arisen the Holy Spirit can create faith in Jesus Christ.

But what happens if there isn't any work of that kind in

the heart? First of all, that is not the fault of the Word. "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword." Heb 4:12. But even when people do not receive what God offers, the Word is active. Then it performs a judging work: the resistant heart will remain under the judgment of the Lord, either until it repents or until the end, when the final judgment will come. Jn 12:47-48.

2. Law and Gospel in the Word of God

Of course it is possible to point out commandments of the Law and graceful words of the Gospel ("good tidings") in the Bible. But that is only the one side of the matter. What is Law and what is Gospel also depends on our own situation at the time of hearing the Word, our experience in the past, etc. This can be shown by a clear example. We can take the well-known word: "Follow me." At certain times, when we are very busy pursuing our career or anxious to perform all duties of life, we may regard this word as a harsh commandment, disturbing us. We may also ask: "Why should I? Isn't there any other way suitable to me?" The word "follow me" is then taken by us as a matter of strict law. But another time, when we have tried our own ways fully enough, then the same word may sound comforting, as a word of welcome, soft and blessing: to come into the arms of the Lord, when we have been shuffled around and bruised in the matters of the world: "Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Mt 11:28.

Generally it may be said that the Law gives us the knowledge we need about the holy will of God, about our sins and transgressions, and about our condition as sinners. Such truths may be found in almost any words of the Bible, even when in most cases they are looked upon as words of the Gospel. Generally it can also be said about the Law: there is a borderline, where the Law cannot proceed any

farther. When it has convinced us that we are sinners, it cannot forgive our sins. It can only be a guide, directing us up to that line, where the Gospel must take over. Gal 3:24.

Generally, the Gospel shows us the grace in Christ, and what is more, this grace is sufficient for all people, and it is also meant for us: Jesus Christ . . . “is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world”. 1 Jn 2:2. “The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners.” 1 Tīm 1:15.

3. Different kinds of prayers

St. Augustine has said: “Prayer is to speak with God.” By this statement he has pointed to an essential side of our prayers: their connection with God, the communion with God, an openness towards God of such a kind that we open our lips, hearts and minds towards Almighty God. Only in this way will it be possible to confess to God what we have done wrong, to ask God for the help we need, to pray for other people in need, and also to thank and praise God.

But the words of St. Augustine can also be misunderstood. This happens if we understand the words “speak with God” in such a way as to mean plenty of words and a lot of talking. Such behaviour is one of the greatest dangers when we pray. Jesus has said about some sort of “spiritual people”: “They think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them.” Mt 6:7–8. Of course we may use many words if we need them to express before God what we need and feel. But all the prayer goes wrong if we pile up unnecessary words, thinking that because of the number of words God will be inclined to listen to us. In this connection we ought to add also what is said elsewhere: Prayer is not only talking before God. Prayer is also quietness and silence before God, listening to God, and resting in silence in His holy presence.

These sides of prayer have to deal with our qualities as human beings. We are not only brain and reason. There are many other sides to our spiritual beings: willing and feeling, a longing for love and fellowship, etc. Therefore the whole of us ought to be engaged in our prayers: body, soul and spirit. The whole of our heart, our will, our feelings, all our spiritual powers should be with us and take part in our prayers.

But in all this we have to remember that all prayers are different in themselves. For our present purpose it may be enough to mention four or five different kinds of prayers.

The simplest form of prayer is the *petition*: we ask for things we need for outward or spiritual help. It is not improper to ask for such things, but it will be wrong if we remain in this stage and pray only for ourselves and our needs.

The second simplest form is to *pray on behalf of others*, for things they need, and for outward and spiritual help to them. This kind of prayer is called *intercession*. It will be dangerous if we remain in this stage also, even if we pray for others. If we have nothing else to say to God other than asking Him to fulfil the needs of those who are related to us, it would be rather selfish.

Intercession thus means praying for those who are related to us, friends, co-workers, etc., either they need things or are in danger or are suffering. Intercession will also include believers and unbelievers, but we also have a strong Christian duty always to pray for our pastors and leaders, for our congregation, and our Church.

Intercession is a kind of prayer that draws down blessings from God upon those for whom we pray. It is possible to help others more by our intercession than by doing for them some small thing or by bringing them visible gifts. But when we pray for them, it may also bring results in the most unexpected way. When we pray for them, that they may be

helped by God, we may feel a strong call from God to give them the help they need.

To avoid the danger of selfishness, every Christian should be very eager to learn more about the third kind of prayer. That is *thanksgiving*, giving thanks to God for all His gifts and for His manifold mercies. Even here our in-born selfishness may creep in. We may behave like somewhat spoilt children and think: "If we thank well, we may receive still more gifts, and receive them more easily." In all our prayer life, therefore, we must go on learning, both generally and with regard to the hardest lesson of all, humility.

The fourth kind of prayer is the most difficult of all: *adoration*. It is easier to tell what it is not than to tell what it is. It is not petition, it is not intercession, and it is not thanksgiving. Instead, it is a kind of rejoicing before God, because He is great, and because He is God. It is also a kind of dwelling, very often in silence, before God. There is a similarity to thanksgiving, the third kind of prayer, because in the adoration we also praise God, loudly or silently, because He is high, and because He is God, and because it is blissful to be in His holy presence.

There is also a way of treating the Word of God that can be considered as a fifth kind of prayer, although it may not be a regular prayer every time. It is what we call "*meditation*" or "*contemplation*". How does it work? When we read a Bible text we may read it right through. That is not meditation, even if we think carefully about every word we read. In the meditation it is different. In the meditation we may stop at a certain word or a group of words, think them over, read them again, and apply them to our hearts and souls: "What do they tell me? Do I see and practise in my own life what this means?" It is also possible to turn our thoughts to spiritual things and subjects concerning the life of Jesus Christ Himself, His atonement for sinners, His

death and resurrection, His return on the last day, life everlasting, etc. Sometimes we may remain in silence before a certain word or certain words only, and allow them to sink into our hearts and to penetrate our minds. Such meditation may take five or ten minutes, or an hour or more, but whatever the time it takes, we dwell in silence before the Word of God and before His holy Majesty.

Meditation or contemplation will not easily be practised by unexperienced Christians. It is rather a way of reading the Bible and of prayer that can be practised by such Christians who have gone further than most people have done in the richness of the Word of God.

It is self-evident that meditation cannot easily be practised in a group or in the prayers of a family. It is more suitable for the individual's Bible-reading and prayer. If it is practised in a group of Bible-readers or in a service it will be more like a sermon, but a very special kind of sermon: a sermon of meditation.

Some general advice with regard to our prayers

We should always pray *in a humble and penitent way*, submitting ourselves to the will of God.

We should also pray *in Jesus' name*. This expression, "in Jesus' name", means several things. It means to pray *in the way He has taught us*. It is, for example, impossible to ask God to help us with vengeance upon our personal enemies and then end our prayer with the words "in Jesus' name". Why is it impossible? Because these words can be used only to endorse, to underline strongly, what we have prayed for. Therefore these words make a prayer about vengeance impossible.

Secondly these words mean to pray *in the same way as He did*. He prayed: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Mt 26:39. When praying "in Jesus' name", we must always try to reach that spiritual level where we submit to God humbly

and try to find out what is His will with regard to us.

To pray "in Jesus' name" further means that *a wonderfully strong promise is put before us* when we pray: Jesus Himself will support our prayers before our heavenly Father and somewhat make them His own prayers. This is exactly what He has promised: "Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father, He will give it to you in my name . . . Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." Jn 16:23-24.

"Free prayers" or "fixed prayers"?

Some people are more in favour of free prayers, i.e. prayers which they word themselves at the time of praying, each time with new words according to what they need and feel at the moment.

There are other people who are more in favour of such prayers that they can find in prayer-books or in the "agendas" of church services. They find it much easier to use such ready-made prayers than to try to find their own words to express what they need and feel.

Now it must be said that it is wrong to make any sharp distinction between these two kinds of prayers. We need both kinds! Sometimes we feel it is easier to express our needs in our own words. Sometimes we find it difficult to do so. Then it will be a great help and a real relief to find the words ready for us. They express what we cannot express ourselves.

There is another side of this matter. It has to do with our services or wherever a number of people pray together. It is difficult for other people to share what they hear from somebody else in "free" prayers. When they use together what they know and can follow from their book or agenda, or from their memory, it may be the prayer of all.

The prayer also concerns the Christian life

Our prayer does not concern our faith only. It must be closely connected with our daily life also. The Word of God

tells us that we must “strive for holiness”. Heb 12:14. This means that the love, holiness and righteousness we have received through the grace of God should form and colour and penetrate all our life, our thoughts, words and deeds. But we all have to confess that we have not yet reached this goal, but we should “press on to make it our own, because Christ Jesus has made us His own”. Phil 3:12. Only a life in the light of God’s Word, in the communion of the Church, in fellowship with other Christians and in prayer will ever make it possible for us to reach this heavenly goal.

4. The Church Year

We all know what an ordinary year means: it consists of 365 or 366 days from 1st January to 31st December. But what is a “Church year”?

The Church year starts with the first Sunday in Advent and ends with the last Sunday in the long period of Trinity. But what about *the commencing date* of the Church year? Both the beginning and the end of a Church year will come about 1st December or, more exactly, it may start on 27th November or one of the following days up to 3rd December, and it will end on a similar date the following year. But why this difference? It all depends on Christmas Day. Christmas Day is always celebrated on 25th December, whatever day of the week this may be. If it is a Monday or Tuesday, the fourth Sunday in Advent will be on 24th or 23rd December, and then the third, second and first Sunday in Advent will all have their dates in December. But if Christmas Day is on a Friday or Thursday, those Sundays in Advent will come earlier. If Christmas Day is on a Sunday, then the fourth Sunday in Advent will be on December 18, and the first Sunday in Advent on November 27.

But what is *the content* of a Church year? During such a year the Church can follow the life of Jesus Christ and His

work to save the world. Thus we can follow Him from His birth at Bethlehem to His ascension to Heaven. But we are also given the opportunity to study and understand His work through His Holy Word and His Holy Spirit in His Church to lead us to a saving faith and to keep us in such a faith.

When and where did the Christian church start to have a Church year? In one way it is impossible to answer this question. When our Lord Jesus Christ “came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up . . . and . . . went to the synagogue, as His custom was, on the sabbath day . . . He stood up to read; and there was given to Him the book of the prophet Isaiah”. Lk 4:16–17. By these words we find that already at that time there was a fixed order of texts for the readings in the services of the year. This service of the synagogue goes back at least to the time of the captivity in Babylon (597–538 B.C.). Possibly this kind of service is still older. In its fixed order of readings there are some features of a Church year.

The service of the synagogue has been changed particularly in two ways, and this change is found already in the New Testament. It becomes clear from two passages in the Acts of the Apostles: “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread . . .”. 2:42; 20:7. The new things here, compared to the synagogue, are “the first day of the week” and “the breaking of bread”, which means the Holy Communion.

Jesus never criticized the services of the synagogue. On the contrary, it was “His custom” to take part in it. (Lk 4:16). In one way, therefore, the work of the synagogue has never ended. Many parts of that service are still found in the services of the present Church. But many things have also been changed under the influence of the New Testa-

ment.

We celebrate our services *on Sundays*, "the day of the Lord". The Barnabas letter (from about 100 A.D.) says: "We keep the eighth day /i.e. the first day of the week/ as a day of rejoicing, on which Jesus rose from the dead." This means that it was not the day when Jesus died that became "the day of the Lord". Instead it was the day of His resurrection. This is a strong testimony of the great importance attached to the resurrection of the Lord. And so "the day of the Lord" became a kind of Easter Day, returning every week!

Thus the Church year and the Sunday service are deeply rooted in history. The overwhelming facts are the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is also manifested in three things in the Church: the Sunday, the Easter, and the Eucharist (Holy Communion). This can be further explained in this way. The Sunday as the day of divine service points to the fundamental truth, upon which the Church rests: **THE LORD IS LIVING**. The Easter of the Church connects this truth with the testimony of history that the Lord is risen from the dead, and the Eucharist makes this truth an ever flowing spring of life to all people, generation after generation.

The Church year may be looked upon from another point of view: in comparison with the seasons of nature. As one season follows another, year after year, with spring, summer, autumn and winter or, where such seasons are not clearly seen, with the regular seasons of ploughing, sowing and harvesting, so the seasons of the Church follow each other. As the cycle of life in nature goes on, year after year, so the Church will present, year after year, the main events of the life of our Lord, and also the main features of the spiritual life, according to the teaching of the Bible and the life of the Church.

Now, what does a Church year mean to us?

It means that within the span of a full calendar year we have the opportunity to hear about and to receive the salvation work that God has accomplished in Jesus Christ.

In a Church year there are 52 weeks plus one or two days. In each week the most important day is Sunday, "the day of the Lord", the day of Christian services and the day of Holy Communion.

In the Old Testament the seventh day of the week, Saturday, was set aside as a holy day and a day of rest. This order was changed at the time of the apostles. Why was it changed? There is only one answer to this question: Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week. "Now after the sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week" some of the first witnesses met with the risen Lord. Mt 28:1. That day, the day of Resurrection, changed everything. The Old Testament had definitely gone over into the New Testament. This "first day of the week" became "the day of the Lord", the day we usually call "Sunday". It is a holy day, the day of Christian services and of prayer, and the day of Eucharist, more than any other day.

The long series of Sundays is the backbone of the Church year. But if the ordinary Sundays are like hilltops in the landscape of the Church, then there are some things like mountain tops rising far above the other tops. That is *the great Church festivals*: Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Day and Pentecost. Easter Day and Pentecost are always celebrated on Sundays. Christmas Day, on the other hand, is always celebrated at a fixed date, 25th December.

Easter Day and Pentecost are placed differently in the Calendar from year to year according to an old agreement in the Christian Church that it should follow the Old Testament tradition with regard to Passover, the Paschal Lamb. Therefore Easter Day is always celebrated on "the first

Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox". The vernal equinox is the date when day and night are of equal length, and it falls on or about 21st March every year.

The Church year begins with the four Sundays in *Advent*, when we expect and prepare for the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ. The festival of this arrival is Christmas.

The Christmas season then goes on until we commence our preparation for Easter, the festival of the suffering, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The time of preparation before Easter is called *Lent*.

Easter is the greatest festival of all during the Church year. First of all it reminds us of the great deed of salvation which God accomplished, when He delivered the people of Israel from Egypt. To all Christians this is a wonderful prophecy about the deliverance from the powers of sin and death. This deliverance took place when Jesus died on the cross for all sinners and when He rose again from the dead.

The Easter season goes on until Pentecost and thus lasts seven weeks. Pentecost means "the fiftieth" (meaning: the fiftieth day after Easter Day). Pentecost is the festival of the Holy Spirit. By this festival we are reminded about the sending of the Spirit and about His work in His Church to lead us to Christ and to guide us unto the full truth. Jn 16:13.

About half of the full time of the Church year belongs to *the season of Holy Trinity*. This is the time devoted to the work of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. During this time we are instructed about the Word of God, conversion, faith, sanctification, etc. This season is like a display of the full span of Christian life, from childhood to old age, from Baptism to a blessed death. It is not astonishing, then, that the Church year ends with the lessons about eternity and about Christ's return in glory "to judge the quick and the dead".

Other festivals

This account of the Church year has been made somewhat short and sketchy. It depends on the fact that there are a number of Christian festivals which the different Churches either observe differently or leave out altogether. For further studies of details of the Church year, every Christian family is recommended to examine the calendar of their own Church.

It may help us somewhat if we mention some of the festivals not included above. The readers may have them, more or less, in their own churches, or they may find them in some neighbouring churches.

<i>Name of festival</i>	<i>Celebrated on</i>
St. Stephen's Day (a martyr's day)	26th December
New Year's Day (Circumcision of Jesus)	1st January
Epiphany (Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles)	6th January
Septuagesima (or the third Sunday before Lent)	(no fixed date, but it comes 10 weeks before Easter)
Sexagesima (or the second Sunday be- fore Lent)	(comes after Septuagesima)
Quinquagesima (or the next Sunday before Lent)	(comes after Sexagesima)
Ash Wednesday (which is the first day of Lent)	(the Wednesday after Quinquagesima)

Palm Sunday	(the Sunday next before Easter)
Ascension Day (day when Christ ascended to heaven)	(comes on Thursday, the second week before Pentecost)
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple	2nd February
The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary	25th March
St. John Baptist's Day	24th June
St. Michael and All Angels	29th September
All Saints' Day	1st November
Reformation Day	(Celebrated by some Lutheran and Evangelical Churches, but on different days).

Why do we begin all over again every year?

To put it briefly it means two things. First of all, Jesus comes again every year, because *we must hear the Gospel*, see the blessings of it and consider them, all over again. If it were not done in this way, His coming, His salvation and His blessed work might not reach us or mean anything to us.

Secondly, He comes in this way, because He wants to come to *each one of us*. Or would it help us, that He came long ago in a different country, or that He came long ago to His Church and to other people in this country, if He did not come to us here, *even this year?*

But why is all this done in one single year?

As we have said before, the Church year goes back to the Synagogue and to the Old Testament. But it is also connected with the development, the seasons and changes in nature, during the span of one year. Everything taken together there is a wonderful wisdom on God's side in all this. How would it be, if the teaching now contained in one Church year had been extended over five or ten years to make it "full", "complete" or "really satisfactory", as we often wish to do things? It is very easy to answer this question: Many people starting as catechumens or youngsters or Bible School students with a programme extending five or ten years ahead would never see the end. They would never come to any sort of understanding with regard to Christ or the way of salvation. Before they came that far, they would be harvested by death or accidents or, more likely, by their own tiredness. Now there isn't such a danger. Now it is possible to obtain a good understanding of the most important things in the fairly short period of one year, and *then improve their knowledge and understanding in following years.*

If we consider this, we may understand that *the Church year is as marvellous a wonder as the wonders of nature*, shown in one single year and then repeated year after year.

5. How our family prayers can be arranged

For every Christian it is necessary to use the Word of God and to pray regularly. It is not enough to do this on Sundays. We need the Word of God in our homes and families every day. We need daily prayers as well. For these purposes, it is necessary to have some kind of fairly fixed order. Such an order should not be regarded as something tiresome or as a pressure upon us. It should be regarded as a great help and a blessing to us. We can compare our family prayers with the home order of meals. We do not

always feel hungry or happy when we go to the regular daily meals. And yet we take the meals regularly, because we know that it is useful in many ways. It helps us both physically and mentally if we take them daily and regularly. It is in the same way with our Bible-reading and our prayers. It would be a bad order to take these things only when we "feel like doing it", or when we think that we are spiritually in need of them. Under such circumstances we would soon suffer from spiritual starvation.

Family prayers can be taken in the morning or evening, or both. More seldom will it be possible to take them in the middle of the day, e.g. in connection with the meal in the middle of the day.

Whether the family prayers should be taken in the morning, or evening, or both, or at some other time, will depend on the different kinds of work the family members have to attend to and when it is most convenient for them to be together. This question about the most suitable time must be decided upon by the family members themselves. Here we will only point out some important things to consider in connection with such a decision.

The family prayers, when father, mother, children and other members of the household have their devotion together, *do not exclude individual Bible-reading or prayers*. On the contrary, the devotion they have together should encourage all members of the family to read the Bible and to pray more eagerly and earnestly, each one by himself or herself. With regard to the children it is the best way to make them Bible-reading Christians and praying Christians, if they are taught and trained in this respect from their early years. The family prayer is the easiest and best way quietly to guide them onto the way of praying and reading the Bible. When we say "Bible-reading", of course this word does not exclude the use of "prayer-books" or other books of devotion, nor the use of books of "short

sermons", which can be read on e.g. Sundays or Saturday evenings. If such books are good, they are suitable tools to lead us into the "Book of books", which means the Bible.

How to arrange family prayers

Every father or mother, or whoever will have the responsibility, may decide on what is the best order for their particular home. Generally speaking, the devotion taken every time ought to include a reading from the Bible, a free prayer or a prayer taken from some kind of prayer-book, the Lord's Prayer or one of the two blessings, possibly also a Christian hymn or song. If devotions are taken both in the morning and in the evening, the one in the morning can be made shorter, and the one in the evening somewhat longer and more complete.

As an example, showing how the devotions can be arranged in the family, we refer our readers to Chapter III in this book. One finds morning and evening prayers for four weeks together with some points of instruction. After having finished those four weeks one may start with the first week again.

Generally it may be stressed that Bible readings should be taken regularly both from the Old and from the New Testament, not necessarily each time, but at regular intervals. In Chapter V of this book there are Bible readings listed in two tables. The tables are different in many ways, but both follow the ordinary year, from January 1 to December 31. This means that every day *the readings can be found according to the date of the day.*

There is one difficulty in this connection: Some people like to take the Bible readings according to the Church year. No table of that kind is found in this book, because different churches have their own calendars or "almanacs", listing the texts of their respective Church year. — Those who wish to find Bible readings according to the Church

year are recommended to use the Church calendar of their particular church for that purpose.

Of course a family can arrange its own table of Bible readings. In such cases it is necessary to observe two things. First of all it is necessary to take Bible readings both from the Old Testament and from the New Testament. Secondly it is necessary to continue for some time with consecutive readings from one book, in order to get the continuity needed and in that way also a good understanding. Therefore, when the reading changes from one book in the Bible to another, before the first book is finished, it should be at a suitable place where the reading easily can start again later.

General advice to the family

It is advisable, especially where there are young children, not to make the family prayers too long. If the children consider them to be too long, they will also think that they are boring and tiresome. In that case the prayers will not serve their purpose. This purpose should be to make all the members of the family happy of being Christians and of meeting with God. The prayers ought to be longed-for occasions of happiness and rejoicing, even if we often have to bring our matters of sadness, sickness, grief and suffering before God in our prayers.

To make children and young people feel they share in the readings and prayers, it may be advisable to let them *take part in the reading aloud of the Bible portions*, perhaps by taking turns according to their ability. It is also advisable to choose songs and hymns in which they can take part, e.g. by letting them sing what they have been taught in their Sunday-school, at school or elsewhere where Christian songs are taught.

Finally it is also advisable to allow the children and the other young members of the family to *make questions about*

the text that has been read or on other matters that have been brought up during the devotion. Some fathers and mothers also have a somewhat natural gift of talking to the children and of putting questions to them, etc. Such conversation may deal with matters touched upon in the text, the actual position of the day in the Church year, the coming Sunday or Church festival, etc.

All these things have to be taken up, decided on and exercised *in a spirit of friendly understanding and love*, not in an air of examination. We always have to remember that the children do not have the same knowledge as adults, but they may have a longing to learn and to increase “in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and man”. Lk 2:52.

II
FAMILY READINGS
WITH SHORT PRAYERS
FOR
THE GREAT FESTIVALS
OF THE CHURCH YEAR

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

“Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” Mt 21:9.

When Jesus Christ came to this world a new time started. So it was already when He was born at Bethlehem. So it was when He started to teach and preach among His people. But a new time also started when He rode into Jerusalem before His suffering. Jerusalem was the capital of the kings. Jesus Christ entered His capital riding a donkey.

Why did all this happen? First of all it had been promised in the holy Scriptures. The Messiah, the Son of God, would arrive in this way. Further it had been said that the Messiah would not rule by outward weapons, but by mercy and love. Jerusalem would therefore become the city of His suffering, death and resurrection. There He would die for the sins of the world.

“Advent” means arrival. When we celebrate Advent it means that Jesus arrives. He comes to our churches, cities, towns, villages and homes. Then we ought to greet Him: “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” But why do we repeat this year after year? Because there is a danger in our hearts that we may start to slacken in our faith. Jesus wants us to watch and pray, so that we are ready to receive and greet Him, when He comes the final time, but then “on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”. Mt 24:30.

Prayer: O Lord Jesus, help us all to receive you with a true and living faith. Also help us to be ready to receive you when you come back in glory to gather your people in your eternal Kingdom. Amen.

CHRISTMAS EVE

“Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people.” Lk 2:10.

The words about the great joy were spoken by an angel to the shepherds at the first Christmas to tell them that their Saviour was born at Bethlehem. When we celebrate Christmas it is a great joy to many. The members of the family wish to be together at home, they exchange Christmas gifts, and they all do their best to make it a great festival. But in all this we must avoid two dangers: to make the festival a worldly one, with a lot of outward arrangements, and to make the festival a selfish one, with the only aim of enjoying ourselves. To celebrate Christmas in such ways is to forget those who are lonely, poor, sick or unhappy.

“The great joy” is different. It has to do with the salvation of all men. This salvation was commenced when the Saviour was born. He did not come as a worldly king or as a governor of a great empire. Nor did He come in wealth or outward splendour. No, He came as a little child, under the simplest conditions in a poor country. This shows us that salvation and heavenly joy may “come to all the people”, if they want to receive it. Nobody is excluded from the true Christian joy.

If it is so, then let us all prepare ourselves for this true joy. Let us forget unnecessary cares and arrangements. Instead let us turn to the Word of God for “the good news”, and to Him who is the true Christmas gift, the Son of God, the Saviour of all.

Prayer: Our heavenly Father, we thank you for the precious gift at the first Christmas, your dear Son, Jesus Christ. Help us now to prepare ourselves for a true Christmas, that the great joy may become ours. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHRISTMAS DAY

“To you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.” Lk 2:11.

Jesus Christ is called the Lord. But He appeared in a very simple way, as a little child. He was not born in the houses of well-to-do people, but in a shed where He was put in a manger. How could such a poor child be the Saviour of all mankind? First turn this question round: Could a prince, or a successful businessman have become the saviour of all men? Possibly of the richest, or of his friends and admirers, but not of the ordinary, poor people. Such people would say of him: “No, he is not our man. He does not understand us or even care about us.” Only one, who humbled Himself as Jesus Christ did when He became a poor child, could be the Saviour of all. Later in life Jesus proved this when He said: “Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden.” Mt 11:28.

But it is not the poverty that made Jesus a Saviour. He is the Saviour because He is the Son of God. The Messiah, the eternal Son of God, is the same as the man Jesus. The angel had said to Mary: “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High.” Lk 1:31–32. Thus Jesus Christ is God and man, the eternal Son of God, and still a human being of flesh and blood, but without sin. Therefore He can be the Saviour of all men, to deliver them from sin and death and give them an eternal hope. Therefore, “let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened”. It is a most blessed thing. “Glory be to God in the highest!”

Prayer: O God, heavenly Father, we praise and glorify your name, because you have had such mercy upon us as to send us Jesus Christ as our Saviour. Help us all to receive Him with a living faith. May His name be known and praised today all over the world. Amen.

SAINT STEPHEN'S DAY

"I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled." Lk 12:49.

The great change from Christmas Day to Saint Stephen's Day may astonish us. We have just heard the wonderful message "peace on earth" at Christmas, and then comes this message that seems to be the opposite, "fire upon the earth". But is it really quite opposite?

First let us look upon the life of Jesus Christ Himself. He was only a little child when He was pursued and had to find shelter as a fugitive in Egypt. Later in life He was hated and despised in many ways. He was crucified because He claimed to be the Messiah and the Saviour of men.

What happened to our Lord can often be seen in the lives of His disciples. One of these is Stephen. He was "full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people". This fact filled many with hatred: "They cast him out of the city and stoned him." The death of Stephen must be seen in connection with his firm belief in his Saviour and his strong testimony about Him to the world.

This can happen to all of us. We cannot keep the great Christmas gift, Jesus Christ, all to ourselves. The message must be carried out to the world. Then there may be suffering and persecution, sometimes bloodshed and death. What about all that? "Rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed." 1 Pet 4:13.

Prayer: O Lord Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, help us to understand your precious gift of Salvation. Also help us to be ready to witness about you. And when the call becomes a call to suffer, then help us to be steadfast, whatever it may cost us. Amen.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

"I am with you always, to the close of the age." Mt 28:20.

Every time, when we come to the turn of the year, we use to ask: What will happen during the coming year? What will happen in our own family, in our church, in our country or in the world? Sometimes these questions are quite superficial. They only mean: "It would be very interesting to know what will happen." But sometimes the questions come from a deep anxiety: "Will it become very difficult? Will there be a way through?"

The unseen difficulties will be different from case to case. They may have to do with sickness, work, unemployment, hunger, famine, and perhaps war. We may have to face loneliness, despise by other people, persecution, possibly imprisonment or death. Will there be any help, if something of this kind will be our lot in the coming year?

We all have a refuge in God. It means that we can turn to Him in all need. This becomes exceedingly clear in the promise Jesus gave to His disciples: "I am with you always." This means that no difficulty can become too great. In the deepest need we can be with Jesus, because He has promised to be with us. But to whom does this promise apply? Of course to the whole world and all men, because they were created by God. But in particular the promise applies to the disciples of Jesus: If we stick to God's promises in our baptism, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, then we are with Jesus, our Saviour and Lord. Then we may be hopeful and rest assured, whatever may befall us next year or in years to come.

Prayer: O eternal God, be our refuge in the coming year. Keep us under your everlasting arms, whatever we shall have to face. In you is all our hope. In Jesus' name. Amen.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

“And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus.” Lk 2:21.

This festival comes a week after Christmas. In the first place we remember the circumcision of Jesus. By this He fulfilled the Law right from His first days in this world. All through His life He did the same: He fulfilled the Law and the prophets. Mt 5:17.

At the time when Jesus was circumcised it was the sign of belonging to the covenant of God. Later this was changed. When Jesus Himself instituted Holy Baptism, this sacrament became the new sign. Therefore, on New Year's Day we also remember our baptism. When we were baptized, it was done “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”. It means that we became born anew, made the children of God and inheritants of the Kingdom of the beloved Son.

When we celebrate New Year's Day we are thus reminded what the name Jesus means to us. He has promised us to pray in His name. It can be our refuge in the new year. What belonged to the old year can be confessed in repentance. Then God says: “I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you.” Is 44:22. And when we look forward we can turn to God in Jesus' name with all our fears and needs. God has promised those who believe in Jesus' name: When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honour them. Ps 91:14–15.

Prayer: O God, our help in ages past, forgive us what we have done wrong in the year now gone by. Help us in this new year that we may always be under your shelter and grace. In all let it be a blessed year in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE EPIPHANY

“When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.” Mt 2:10.

The star guided “the wise men from the East” and helped them to find their Saviour. There is still a star that can guide people to Christ, not people from the East only, but people from all over the world. In all countries there are many who have set out to search for spiritual light. They are tired of the dark powers which they both fear and obey. Some of these people have a faint knowledge of a great god, the Great-Great one, and now they have set out to search for information about Him.

When the Christian missionaries came to foreign countries, many people were indifferent or even hostile to their message. But some opened their hearts and received the good news of salvation in Christ. How can this difference be explained, since nobody can create faith in his own heart? It is all due to the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. The Word is like “a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts”. 2 Pet 1:19.

All who are Christians have seen this light themselves, because mission work has been done among them. Now it is their Christian duty to make the lamp shine in dark places and of letting the morning star rise in the hearts of people who live in “a land of deep darkness”. Is 9:2. That is mission work, whatever land it comes from.

Prayer: O Lord, Jesus Christ, we thank you that the morning star has risen among us and brought to us the true light. May the saving Word be brought to all people in the world and make them rejoice at the salvation in your holy name. Amen.

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE (CANDLEMAS)

“They brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord.” Lk 2:22–23.

When Joseph and Mary brought a certain sacrifice, they acted according to the Law. For Jesus Himself, being the Son of God, the sacrifice would not have been needed. But Jesus followed this rule: “Thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.” Mt 3:15. He went up to Jerusalem to present the most precious sacrifice ever brought forth. As our High Priest He did not sacrifice “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons”. No, much more than that was brought forth: “When Christ appeared as a high priest . . . , He entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.” Heb 9:11–12.

The text about Joseph, Mary, Jesus, Simeon and Anna is like a prophecy about the still greater days that will come in Jerusalem. Thus there will be a Good Friday, when the Lamb of God will be brought forth to “take away the sin of the world”. That is also the day when the highest High Priest will bring the precious offer of His own blood. There will also be a day when the Lord will rise from the dead. In all this we can see how the Law of God is fulfilled “to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness”. Dan 9:24.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, everlasting God, help us to understand what a holy sacrifice means. Above all help us to see that the offering of Christ is our only refuge, because He has offered Himself for the sins of the world. Also purify our hearts that they may become the dwelling of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ASH WEDNESDAY (The first day of Lent)

“When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret.” Mt 6:17–18.

These words were first spoken against certain people called “hypocrites”, which means that these people were false and untrue in their hearts with regard to faith. When fasting they concentrated on their outward look, to make the impression that they fasted intensely: “They disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men.”

What is real fasting then? It has to do with true repentance. When concentrating on these matters of mind and conscience people often forego some food or some meals, sometimes at regular intervals. This may be a good way in many cases. We have examples of this kind in the Bible. But the whole thing goes wrong, if people “disfigure their faces” in order to display their fasting. Then it is not a matter of the heart, nor a matter before God. It has become a matter before people in order to be praised by them.

But why does Jesus speak to us about fasting these days? Today is the very day of commencing Lent. We prepare ourselves to go with Jesus up to Jerusalem, the city of suffering, cross and death. What is right preparation, then? It is to remember that Jesus did all this for us, to suffer and die for us, *for our sins*. If the Word of God strikes our hearts with the power of the Holy Spirit, then there will be true repentance. “For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation.” 2 Cor 7:10.

Prayer: O God, heavenly Father, save us from all kinds of hypocrisy. Let your Holy Spirit create in us a true repentance that we may praise your holy name because of the salvation in Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (March 25)

“Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High.” Lk 1:31–32.

We confess that Jesus Christ is God and man: He was “conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary”. That is also the message at this festival of the Church.

The angel told Mary that *the life of the man Jesus* was to be kindled by the Spirit. *The Son of God, Christ, has been from eternity*. He is God, Creator of heaven and earth. At the annunciation Christ, the eternal Son of God, united Himself with the unborn man Jesus, to be “born of woman”. With this union the promise, given at the great Fall, would be kept by God: that “the Seed of the woman” would bruise the head of the Serpent. Gen 3:15.

Mary was greatly astonished when she heard about giving birth to a child. But the angel told her: “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.”

Why are these words so important to us? They deal with the only way of salvation. An ordinary man cannot save us. An ordinary man is a sinner like ourselves, *Jesus Christ is true man and yet true God*: “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Jn 1:14. Thus Annunciation Day is like Christmas, it is a prophecy about Christmas and the beginning of it. The rejoicing at the birth of a Saviour can start: “Glory be to God in the highest!”

Prayer: We thank you, eternal God, that after the fall of all mankind you have not abandoned us but decided to save us. Let the word about the coming Saviour be received in our hearts and create a living faith. Amen.

PALM SUNDAY

“They took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, crying, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!’ ” Jn 12:13.

We do not know if the crowd this day was the same as a crowd a few days later, urging the governor to crucify Jesus. Partly it may have been the same. It is always dangerous to join crowds. They may be right in their cries and demands, but they may also be terribly wrong, unfair, selfish, unjust, pushed on by agitators. When we join such crowds we may become their victims and end up by doing very bad and wrong things.

Much more important than the crowd is the King. Today He entered His holy city, not in triumph *after* a battle, but *before* the battle, to fulfil the promises of salvation. His city, Jerusalem, would become the city of the battle, suffering, death and resurrection. “His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of Him and had been done to Him.”

Everything else here in John 12 underlines the importance of this entry into Jerusalem: the cries of “Hosanna”; the behaviour of Mary, the sister of Lazaros, who anointed Jesus and thus prepared Him for His death and burial; the presence of Lazaros, who had been raised by Jesus and by his mere presence testified about the coming, victorious rising of Jesus Himself.

Now, how do we prepare ourselves for the festivals of Good Friday and Easter Day? That will decide in what way we are going to sing our Hosanna.

Prayer: O Lord Jesus, let us be among those who walk up with you to Jerusalem, who enter the holy city with you, and who obtain the eternal blessing of your death, resurrection and victory. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY

“And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left.” Lk 23:33.

One of these criminals is known to us because of one thing only: he mocked Jesus, seemingly asking for help, but in fact telling Jesus that instead of being a helper He was helpless. The other criminal then rebuked and warned his companion and after that turned to Jesus: “Remember me when you come in your kingly power.” With reference to the example of this latter criminal many people say or think that they can postpone their conversion up to the last day or last hour of their lives. They say: “Remember the robber!” Who has told them that there will be opportunities for them to be converted on the last day or in the last hour? The only thing we know in this matter is: The mercy of Jesus covers all sins, *if this mercy is accepted while the time of mercy still lasts.*

The heaviest of all crosses was the one carried by Jesus. The deepest suffering anybody has ever gone through was the suffering of Jesus: “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with His stripes we are healed.” Is 53:5.

This cross and what Jesus suffered on it have changed the prospects of all men. Those who carry “crosses” of *suffering* can get the consolation that He suffered with them and for them. Those who feel the burden of their *sins* can obtain forgiveness, because He has removed their guilt.

Prayer: Jesus Christ, who died on this cross for me, help me that your holy blood may not have been shed in vain for me. Instead let it cleanse me from all evil. Also help me to live in faith and to have an eternal hope. Amen.

EASTER DAY

“Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay.” Mt 28:5–6.

It had been promised already by the prophets of the Old Testament that the Messiah would rise from the dead. Many times Jesus had also told His disciples that He would rise. When the resurrection took place it was a wonderful thing: “Behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone.” Then the angel gave the two women the above-mentioned message and ordered them to let the disciples know.

The resurrection of Jesus is like a new creation. But many people do not believe it. They say it is a story only. Many people, who are called Christians, do not believe it either. They say: “No miracles ever happen in this world. Jesus might have been a great man, but he did not rise from the dead. The fine thing with him is that he was full of love and gave a good example for us to follow.” Such people do not have a Saviour. They refuse to believe that a Saviour is needed and that there is one.

All true Christians believe that the Saviour is risen. He “was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification”. Rom 4:25. Thus God is fully atoned. The road to the lost paradise has become opened again. Now the risen Lord wishes to meet us in His Word and sacraments, and in the fellowship of His Church. That is our Galilee, where He wishes to meet us.

Prayer: O Lord Jesus, our risen Saviour. We thank you for this message that you have defeated our great enemies, sin, world, and death. Now help us always to live in this faith, that we may be found among those who become saved for ever. We pray this in your glorious name. Amen.

ASCENSION DAY

“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11.

Our Lord Jesus Christ had come into this world from His glory in heaven. He had come to reestablish what had been broken at the great Fall. All this He accomplished when He suffered for the sins of all men and rose again from the dead. While He was together with His disciples after His resurrection He promised them His Holy Spirit. After that promise He ascended again to heaven.

In one way we may still “stand looking into heaven”. For what reason? First of all because our Lord and Saviour “sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty”. From His heavenly throne He rules His holy Church. From there He intercedes for all those who believe in Him and in His name “fight the good fight”. In all our troubles and defeats we can turn to Him for help, strength and victory. That is why it can be said about all Christians that they “stand looking into heaven”.

But there is another reason for doing this, and that is the second promise of this day: The same Jesus, that has ascended into heaven, “will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven”. The Ascension Day, therefore, is closely connected with the last days of the world, and with the return of Christ for the last Judgment. As He went in glory, so He will return in glory. Therefore all true Christians remain watching and praying, in order to be ready to meet their Lord and Saviour.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help us to live in a true expectation to see you again. When you come back in glory, to judge all men, let us be ready to greet you with joy and to be with you forever. Amen.

WHIT-SUNDAY (Pentecost)

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
Acts 2:4.

When this happened at the first Pentecost, Jesus kept the promise He had given to His disciples before His ascension. The Holy Spirit was given in a most conspicuous way, two clear signs appearing at the same time. One sign was the tongues of fire, another sign was the speaking in foreign languages by the apostles. The sign of fire was given to show how the disciples would carry the fire of the Lord all over the world. The sign of speaking the foreign languages was to show how the apostles, evangelists and other messengers of the Lord in future would witness about Him in the different languages of the world. The languages mentioned here are ordinary, true languages, because the people present from different countries could recognize the words and understand the message without any interpretation. Such languages should not be mixed up with the “speaking with tongues” that needs interpretation, because it is not an ordinary language. 1 Cor 14:26–33.

The miracle of the first Pentecost is a token of what we possess in the holy Christian church. The Spirit of Christ is always in our midst, doing God’s work through the Word and the sacraments, in order to create in us a living faith in Christ and to help us to live as witnesses for Christ wherever we stay.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, the Spirit of Light, Life and Fire. We pray you to create in us a living faith in Jesus Christ. Also help us to become true witnesses for Him in words and deeds. Amen.

TRINITY SUNDAY

“O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!” Rom 11:33.

There is a difference which is unbridgeable between the Christian faith and other religions: HOLY TRINITY. This doctrine means that there is only one God, but in the Godhead there are three divine persons, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. It is possible to explain this doctrine to some extent, in words or pictures, but at the end we must confess that it passes our understanding.

There is one point, round which all thoughts and explanations must move: the incarnation, i.e. God became man. The eternal God “became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father . . . No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has made Him known.” Thus we must start with the coming of Christ, His teaching and His work for the salvation of men. If we overlook or abandon these things, it means that we prefer to follow our own thoughts.

The second thing we have to concentrate on is the sending of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said about Him: “When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth.” Jn 16:13. This means that we cannot go beyond the Word of God. Only God’s Holy Spirit can explain these things to us. Therefore let us thank and praise God for His “unsearchable judgments” and His “inscrutable ways”.

Prayer: We praise you, eternal God, that you are one in majesty and glory and that it has pleased you to reveal yourself to us as the Father of all, as the eternal Son and Saviour, and as the Holy Spirit, the guide and Counsellor unto all truth. Keep us all in this truth now and forever. Amen.

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY (June 24)

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Is 40:3.

In the Old Testament there was a prophet known as a very straightforward man, a man of Law, fire and spirit. His name was Elijah. Later there was a prophecy about him that at a certain time he would return, "before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes". Mal 4:5.

Before Jesus commenced His work in public there appeared a man like Elijah. His name was John, commonly called "John the Baptist". At one occasion Jesus told His disciples that John the Baptist was the promised Elijah. John is known as a man of the Law. He prepared the way before Jesus by showing people the holiness of God and their own unholiness. Their false holiness must be broken down, and after their repentance their humbled hearts were to be filled with the grace of God. This work is described in this way by the prophet: "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain." When John made the people repent, they were prepared to receive the gospel, the forgiveness of sins through the grace of God.

In one way the work of John the Baptist must go on among us: the Law of God must show us His holiness and reveal our sins. In this way the Law helps to bring us to Christ, with whom there is forgiveness of sins, life and blessedness.

Prayer: Father Almighty, let the voice of the Law be heard among us to reveal all sins, that a true repentance may be created in our hearts. But in your great mercy also help those who repent to receive the forgiveness of their sins, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

SAINT MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS (September 29)

“Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent.” Rev 12:7–9.

It is beyond our understanding how any evil could come into existence in a good world, created by God. But angels and man, being free in all aspects, must have the freedom of choice. Without such freedom they would have been fettered in some way. To live in fetters is not freedom. The evil thought started in an angel in heaven. Other angels followed him. This is how this war arose that is mentioned in Revelation. This angel and his followers turned their wrath against man. That is how the great Fall of man occurred. And so the war between good and evil in this world goes on up to this day.

Today we also remember the fight of the mighty ones who do God’s word, “hearkening to the voice of His word”. Ps 103:20. First think of the Gospel itself. The angels of God have been at work at many important occasions in the life of Jesus Christ. The angels are mentioned at His birth, His temptation, His suffering and His resurrection. When the Lord comes back in glory for the last Judgment, His angels will accompany Him. Mt 25:31.

This day is also the day of the small children. They should never be despised but instead be given special consideration, because “in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven”. Mt 18:10.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to be like the holy angels, rejoicing to hear your word and to serve you wherever you send us. Let us all become such children whose angels always see your face. Amen.

ALL SAINTS' DAY (November 1)

"After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!' " Rev 7:9-10.

These words give much consolation to all who wish to belong to the Lord. Sometimes they must ask themselves how it will be possible for them to come through and reach heaven. When they look at themselves they are tempted to say: "It is impossible!" But when they look at the great multitude of saints, shown to us today, they can say: "O, it is possible, after all!" The great multitude is a testimony about the powers at work for their salvation. But how is it possible, then? "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." Zech 4:6.

Thus the vision of the great multitude will give us courage and hope, if and when we fight the fight of faith. But in spite of this the sincere question remains: How can we, so often weak and so often failing in faith, ever reach heaven? The answer given today is: "The Lamb . . . will be our shepherd, and He will guide us to springs of living water." "The water that I shall give you will become in you a spring of water welling up to eternal life." Jn 4:14.

Prayer: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. When you have already drawn such a great multitude to you, making them believers and saints, continue to do your work among us, through your Word and Spirit, that we may be among those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We pray you in your own holy and glorious name. Amen.

REFORMATION DAY

“I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek . . . ‘He who through faith is righteous shall live.’ ” Rom 1:16–17.

The Gospel, which is the message about salvation in Jesus Christ, is the only way for salvation to every one, either he is a Jew or a Greek. To be “a Greek” here means to belong to “the Gentiles”, i.e. all peoples and tribes who are not of Jewish origin. It is the task of every Church, whatever its denomination, continuously to reform itself according to the Word of God and to the Gospel of salvation. The Gospel concerns all people, and it applies to every individual member as well. Only Jesus Christ can be our righteousness and our rock of refuge. Only by faith is it possible to receive the grace of God that can justify sinners before Him.

This saving Gospel is the greatest treasure that can be found. There is, however, a tendency in churches and in man to abandon it or to bury it among other things. Therefore there is a continuous duty of reformation in every Church: to remove what may be covering the Gospel or hindering its work. It is not enough to expect the Church leaders to do this. It is the call of every Christian. He should examine himself, asking: “What do I believe after all?” But he should also use his life as a testimony in words and deeds, just as St. Paul did: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith.”

Prayer: O God, Father in heaven. We thank you for the precious gift of the true Gospel. Help us by the work of your Holy Spirit to understand it, to receive it in true hearts, and to keep it as the greatest treasure of our hearts. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

III

PRAYERS FOR FOUR WEEKS, MORNINGS AND EVENINGS

Remarks:

1. The order given for each day (point one to five) should be regarded as a suggestion only. The proposed order can be changed to satisfy personal wishes or the needs of the family. Thus the proposed prayer may be replaced with a "free prayer", etc. The proposed order is given as a help, in the first instance to those who find it difficult to work out a good order for their family prayers.
2. "The morning prayer" and "The evening prayer", which are listed every day on the following pages, can be found in Chapter VI (p 131) together with "The Lord's Prayer" and the Benedictions.

SUNDAY MORNING, FIRST WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.

2. The morning prayer.

3. Prayer: O God, heavenly Father. We thank you for this new day, given us for our rest and for the benefit of our souls. Today, when people gather for services in churches and elsewhere, help them to listen to your holy Word, that it may lead them on the way of life and to fellowship with your holy Christian church. Also guide all those who are the leaders and shepherds of the flock. Help them to be diligent in their work and always to aim at the true welfare of your Church. Let your Holy Spirit be at work among us today and always, to create a true and strong Christian fellowship all over the world, that with one accord we may praise your holy and glorious name. Amen.

4. The Lord's Prayer.

5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SUNDAY EVENING, FIRST WEEK

1. Bible reading.

2. Prayer: Father in heaven, we thank and praise you for your guidance and protection this day. Let the Word we have heard be blessed among us. We thank you for the light of this Word and for the eternal hope through Jesus Christ, your dear Son. Help all those who live in spiritual darkness, that they may be led to His wonderful light. When we go to rest this evening, let us remain under your protection, that we may sleep peacefully and tomorrow wake up to a new blessed day. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

3. The evening prayer.

4. The Benediction.

5. Hymn.

MONDAY MORNING, FIRST WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Almighty God, heavenly Father. We thank you for this new day, for the rest of the night, and for the new strength of body and mind that you have given us. Bless our work today. Help us to look upon it as a task given by you as a way of service to our near and dear ones and to fellow-members of the community and of the country. Bless all those who go to their work this morning. Help them to see the meaning of it and to find the best way of serving their neighbour. We also pray for those who have no work at all or are hindered by sickness or weakness. Give them the help and consolation they need. Lord God, be with us today, and let this day be a blessed day, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

MONDAY EVENING, FIRST WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. We thank you for what you have done when you suffered and died for the salvation of the world. Create in us such a living faith in you, that it may be the firm foundation of our lives. Let this faith give us strength against all evil, let it give us courage when we feel disheartened, let it give us hope when we feel tempted to give up. In all our dealings with other people help us to show understanding and consideration. Create in us such a love that flows from your love towards us. We pray you in your own holy name. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

TUESDAY MORNING, FIRST WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, we pray you to let that mind be in us that was in you, when you became man and dwelt among us. Although you had the eternal glory together with the Father before the world was made, you did not watch over this glory. Instead you emptied yourself and took the form of a servant. You humbled yourself and became obedient unto death, even the death on a cross. Now help us, your simple disciples, to be a little like you in humility. Let us remain humble, although we are inheritants of the Kingdom of heaven. Let us remain servants to the help of our brothers and sisters in your Church and in this world. Also help us to remain in faith and in your service until the end. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

TUESDAY EVENING, FIRST WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for the day that has passed. Forgive us all things we have done wrong. Let it all be covered by your mercy in Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Have mercy upon all our near and dear ones, upon our community, our Church and the whole world. You know the shortcomings and sins of all. Father, have mercy upon us. If you acted according to our righteousness, which is none, we would all come under your severe judgment. Therefore, help us every day to turn to your grace and mercy for the sake of Jesus Christ, and then remain in that faith for ever. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, FIRST WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: O God, Father in heaven, ruler of all men. We pray you for all who are in high positions, in our country and in the world, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. Let justice and good order prevail in this country. Help all who are suffering from loneliness, poverty, sickness and injustice to get the help they need. Also help us to assist those in need. When we complain of suffering and injustice, help us that we may not inflict such things upon others. O Lord, call upon your servants and witnesses to do their work that your Law, your mercy and your love may prevail. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FIRST WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you that in your mercy you have brought us to the evening of this day. We also thank you for the fellowship we have with so many near and dear ones. We pray you to help them and bless them in all ways. If there are any who have gone astray in their spirits, then take hold of them by your Word and Spirit. Lead them to know themselves and their ways and, above all, to know Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Help us all to a true knowledge of Him and then remain under His guidance and protection, whatever may happen to us in this world. We pray you in Jesus' name. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

THURSDAY MORNING, FIRST WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, when we commence a new day, let your will be done. Whatever we think, plan and try to do, let our foremost aim and wish be to think and act according to your holy will. When we hesitate about our way, then show us what is right according to your holy will and what is best for us. Let your will and your love direct all our thoughts and actions, also with regard to our neighbours. Make us understand that in everything you work for good with those who love you. Father, may your will be done now and always. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

THURSDAY EVENING, FIRST WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: O God, Father in heaven. We thank you for your manifold gifts and all your help this day. Forgive us what we have done wrong. Forgive us what we have sinned against you and against people we have met. Help us to love enemies as much as friends. Help us to remember your dear Son, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for Himself a people of His own, who are zealous for good deeds. Help us that it may be seen in our lives that your love has taken root in us. Father, let the work you have begun in us continue in a true sanctification. We pray you, Father, in the name of your dear Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

FRIDAY MORNING, FIRST WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, we do not know anything about what will happen to us today. We know very little about ourselves, but we know still less what is in you. Our knowledge is imperfect, but yet the things we know are enough for us. We know that you are our dear Father in heaven and that you give us what is best for us. Above all you want to give us fellowship with your dear Son, because He has accomplished for us salvation and eternal life. Father, let this belief fill our hearts this day and all coming days. In Jesus' name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

FRIDAY EVENING, FIRST WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Jesus Christ, our Lord. We thank you that you have shared with us all duties of this life, all anxiety and suffering. In all this you sought quietness and rest in the presence of your heavenly Father. Dear Saviour, we pray you to share with us all burdens that press so heavily upon us at times, but also all suffering that may befall us. We thank you for your promise when you said: "Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden." Help us to believe in this promise. Help us to rest in your presence. Once let us reach the rest of the heavenly mansions. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

SATURDAY MORNING, FIRST WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Almighty God, Father in heaven, we pray you to give us today what we need for the benefit of our bodies and souls. Since it is not enough to find happiness in this world, help us to use our short and precious time of grace. Let your Holy Spirit work upon our hearts that we may use this time for our spiritual welfare and for our eternal bliss. When our time here is up, then let us depart in peace. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SATURDAY EVENING, FIRST WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Father in heaven, we thank you with all our hearts for your guidance and protection during the days of this week. Now bless the coming day of rest. Let your Holy Word be precious to us. Help us to listen to its admonitions and its promises. Let your Holy Spirit explain it to us that we may walk in its light. Bless all those who will come to the services tomorrow. Strengthen them in their faith, and help them to become true witnesses about their Saviour and Lord. Bless all the servants of the Church that they may render their service according to your holy will. Help your Church all over the world that it may shine as the light of the world and thus make many share in the inheritance of the saints in light. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

SUNDAY MORNING, SECOND WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Lord Jesus, we thank you for this day, the day of your resurrection and triumph. Now enlighten our hearts that we may understand what it means that you have defeated sin, hell and death. Also help us to live in the light of your victory, that we may win our fight against the enemies of our souls. Also help your Church that the powers of death may not prevail against her. Now bless this holy day to all the world. We pray you in your precious name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SUNDAY EVENING, SECOND WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: When this day is ended we thank you, our heavenly Father, for what you have given us in your holy Word, in your sacraments and in our fellowship with other Christians. Help us to keep your precious gifts in thankful hearts. We are forgetful, but you do not forget us. Continue to speak to us that the good seed may bear its fruit when your time comes. Let it be such blessed fruit that will give honour to you and bear a good testimony about our Saviour among those who do not yet believe. We pray you, eternal God, to let the light of your true Gospel shine upon all who dwell in lands of deep darkness. We pray you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

MONDAY MORNING, SECOND WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Almighty God, heavenly Father, we depend on you for everything we need. There is nothing we can do ourselves that will remain forever, but what you do will remain. Therefore we pray you to create such things in us that will remain. Keep us under your protection and guidance forever. Bring us nearer to you, to a fuller understanding of your ways, your mercy and love. Strengthen us by the power of your Holy Spirit that we may press on to reach what you have prepared for those who love you. All this we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

MONDAY EVENING, SECOND WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Father in heaven, when we look back on this day, there are many things we have to confess before you. We have sinned against you in thoughts, words and deeds. We have not loved our neighbour as ourselves. There are also things we have neglected which could have been done by us to your glory. Merciful Father, do not send us away because of our failures and sins. Instead forgive us what we have done wrong or neglected, and build up in us a new love for you and your holy will, for our neighbours and their needs. Let such a love be in us, because you have first loved us. We pray you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

TUESDAY MORNING, SECOND WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, when we commence today's work, help us to overcome all tiredness and slowness that is part of our human conditions. Instead give us a spirit of readiness that willingly we may meet all duties that come our way. In all our work help us to remember what you have done for us in your fatherly love and mercy. Let our work in your service be a reflection of your love for us. Let that joy and happiness be found in us that belongs to the children of your eternal Kingdom. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

TUESDAY EVENING, SECOND WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Almighty God, Father in heaven, we pray for all those who suffer, especially for those who are tempted to become impatient with your ways with them or to give up their faith. Help them to carry the burden laid upon them. Help them to see your light in their own darkness. Whatever they meet, give them faith and hope. Father, if you lead us to some who suffer, help us to share their burdens and to guide them to you. Help us to put before them the example of our Saviour, who suffered for us all. Bless them and all of us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, SECOND WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: O Lord, eternal God, when lifting up our eyes to you this morning we pray for all our near and dear ones, those who are near and those who live far away. Look after them all, give them what they need for their bodies and souls. Most of all we pray for their eternal welfare. Let them all come to a living and true faith, and keep them in that faith that finally they may be brought to their heavenly home. In the name of Jesus Christ, your dear Son. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, SECOND WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: We thank you, most merciful Father in heaven, for the mercy and protection you have given us today. We pray you for all homes in our country, for the parents, for their small children, for their boys and girls. Take them all under your guidance, that they may know you, love you, and walk in faith in your holy name. We pray you for the people of this country. Let it be a people of faith, understanding and love. Remove all misunderstanding, fear and hatred. Create in all of us a spirit of unselfishness and service, that we may be known as a God-fearing people, that will endeavour to do what is right in your eyes. We pray you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

THURSDAY MORNING, SECOND WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: We thank you, heavenly Father, for all your mercy upon us and all your care and protection throughout our lives. Now we pray you for your blessing upon our Church and its congregations. Help them to be beacons of light in their surroundings. Help them to give suffering and anxious people help and consolation and to give uncertain people guidance and strength for their life. Help your Church all over the world to be a bulwark against the evil powers of sin and death. Also help your Church to become successful in her work to gather us all into your eternal Kingdom. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

THURSDAY EVENING, SECOND WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: O God, Almighty Father, when another day has come to its end we realize how fast our life is passing away. Therefore help us to use our time according to the purpose you have set for us and our lives, that we may not live in this world only but also live eternally. When you call us away from this world, to stand before you to account for our time here, then for Christ's sake let us be ready. Thus let our short and precious time in this world be a continuous preparation for the eternal joy and jubilation. This give us in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

FRIDAY MORNING, SECOND WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.

2. The morning prayer.

3. Prayer: O Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. In the difficulties we will meet even today it is a great consolation to us that you have lived here and met the same difficulties. According to your holy example, help us to be humble and to be the servants of men. Also help us to live peaceably with all, if possible, so far as it depends upon us. Help us that we do not avenge ourselves, but instead remember how you have forgiven us what we have done wrong. Let us be transformed by the renewal of our mind, that we may prove what is the will of God. Grant us, O Christ, what we pray in your own holy name. Amen.

4. The Lord's Prayer.

5. The Apostolic Benediction.

FRIDAY EVENING, SECOND WEEK

1. Bible reading.

2. Prayer: O Father, Almighty God, it is not enough that we have been led onto the way of life. It is also necessary that you lead us and keep us on this way. Therefore help us to live in faith and sanctification. Also help us to support one another in words and deeds. But most of all we need the continuous help of your Holy Spirit. Let Him lead us and support us throughout our lives. Let your Church be the blessed home of all who believe. Then she will gather into a true fellowship all those who confess your holy and most blessed name. Amen.

3. The evening prayer.

4. The Benediction.

5. Hymn.

SATURDAY MORNING, SECOND WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, in your mercy you make your sun rise on the evil and on the good, and send rain on the just and on the unjust. Today, when we will meet people of different kinds, help us to show such a love to them. If we do good only to our brethren, what more are we doing than others? Therefore, Father, create in us that love which was in your dear Son, who loved us and gave Himself for us, yes, not for us only but also for the sins of the whole world. Father, let such a love be found among us that it can be seen that we love because we have first been loved by you. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SATURDAY EVENING, SECOND WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: O Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, in your great love and mercy create such a faith in us that is real confidence in you. Also let our faith increase day by day. Defeat all obstacles that may turn up ahead of us. Whoever tries to remove our faith from us, help us to remain in you, just as you said: I pray for those who believe in me, that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us. O Lord Jesus, give us such a faith, and make us steadfast until the blessed end. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

SUNDAY MORNING, THIRD WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, in your great mercy bless all who gather in churches and chapels today. Help them to see the true light in your holy Gospel and to be led by your Holy Spirit on the way of Life. Let the fire of faith and love be burning on the altars of their hearts. Rekindle the fire in those who have turned dull or cool, that there may be a true revival among us. Jesus Christ, for the sake of your love and mercy do not abandon us, but look after your little flock, since it is your Father's pleasure to give us the Kingdom. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SUNDAY EVENING, THIRD WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Holy and most merciful Father, we know you only through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you have sent for our salvation. He has glorified you in His words and His deeds. Now let Him glorify you by His work in our hearts and lives. Let His presence in our midst be our ever flowing spring of water welling up to eternal life. But when we enjoy this, always help us to remember those who do not know you but are trying to quench their thirst in wrong ways, from broken cisterns that can hold no water. Father, we thank you for the promise you have given to all people: If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

MONDAY MORNING, THIRD WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, be our Helper today. Help us to come to a true knowledge of ourselves and our hearts. When you make our sins known to us, then give us a true repentance, that we may not deny the sins or try to hide them. When we confess them, then help us to take our refuge in God's grace according to His promises for Jesus' sake. Holy Spirit, Comforter of men, when we are led to the throne of grace, always witness with our spirit that we are the children of God and fellow heirs with Christ. We pray you in His holy name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

MONDAY EVENING, THIRD WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: O Lord, heavenly Father, in the difficulties of this world we need you more than anything else. But when we search for you, do not allow us to search in vain. Instead show us that you are present before anyone has ever searched for you or cried to you. Father, show us that the craving for you in our hearts is your own work. Make this longing for you clear through your Word and Spirit, and answer it by showing us that whoever has seen your dear Son has seen you. Father, make your word dear to us that those are blessed who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied by coming to Jesus Christ, your dear Son. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

TUESDAY MORNING, THIRD WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, the eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, you satisfy the desire of every living thing. We thank you for all these gifts. Also give us the bread that comes down from heaven, the bread of life that can make us live for ever. We thank you for your promise to give us this bread in your holy Word, in your dear Son and in His Holy Communion. Unite us all that we may become one body with Him and partake of the one Bread. We pray you in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

TUESDAY EVENING, THIRD WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Heavenly Father, Creator of heaven and earth, we thank you for all gifts you give us every day. Most of all we thank you for your wonderful mercy in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Help us always to remain your humble children for His sake, by grace only. Do not allow anybody to deceive us, so that we trust in ourselves or in anything we think we can do. Show us that such things are nothing to rest on or build on, only wood, hay and stubble. When we are tempted to look for another foundation for our faith, then tell us again and again: My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Let us remain in such a true faith for ever, for Jesus' sake. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, THIRD WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, rich in grace and mercy. We do not know what will happen to us today, therefore give us courage and strength to carry the tasks or burdens that may be put upon us. But we also pray you to help all restless and oppressed, those who fear that this day will lay upon them burdens they cannot carry. Give them strength, consolation and hope. We pray you for those who are persecuted because of their Christian faith. Remind them that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Assure them that the present affliction is momentary and preparing for them an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, THIRD WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Father in heaven, in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ we pray you to forgive us all our sins. Forgive us all we have done wrong, but also the many things we have forgotten or neglected. Forgive us that we have attended more to our own needs and cares than to other people who may have needed our help. Forgive us for wasting time we could have used for your service and for the service of our neighbour. O Lord, have mercy upon us, and give us more time and opportunities to serve you henceforth in a better way. For Jesus' sake. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

THURSDAY MORNING, THIRD WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: O God, Almighty Father, according to your Word we wish to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. Grant all this, o Father, for the welfare of our country and of the whole world. We also pray for ourselves, that you give us what we need and what is best for our bodies and souls and for our eternal welfare. Help and bless our near and dear ones, in Jesus' name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

THURSDAY EVENING, THIRD WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: O God, Father in heaven, we pray you to give us your merciful protection during the coming night. We do not know the dangers or enemies that surround us. You know them, you can also stop them and defeat them. Father, help us to understand which enemies we ought to fear most, those we can see or those we do not see, those we think we can deal with ourselves, or those we do not even know. O God, let us always be under your fatherly care and protection, that the evil may have no power over us. Let us rest assured that you are our dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

FRIDAY MORNING, THIRD WEEK

1. /Hymn and/Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Jesus Christ, our dear Lord, help us all to follow your example. You committed no sin, no guile was found on your lips. When you were reviled, you did not revile in return. When you suffered, you did not threaten. O Lord, we know we are far from this. Help us not to repay evil for evil but instead try to do good to those who are against us. Holy Saviour, let that mind be in us that was in you when you humbled yourself and dwelt among us and became obedient unto death. We pray you this in your own holy name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

FRIDAY EVENING, THIRD WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Almighty God, Father in heaven. You have told us to look at the birds of the air, how they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns, and yet you feed them. You have told us to look at the lilies of the field, how they grow, they neither toil, nor spin, and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. But in spite of this we often worry about what we need. Father, let your promises be brought home to us that you know what we need and that you care for us more than for lilies and birds. We confess that we are the people of little faith. Therefore we pray: Increase our faith. We thank you that you have heard our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

SATURDAY MORNING, THIRD WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.

2. The morning prayer.

3. Prayer: Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace. We know this world is a place of strife, unrest and turmoil, but you can change everything. Therefore, o Lord, command our restless hearts to become quiet. Let us find rest in you, because you have taken upon yourself the anxiety and unrest of all men. Since we do not find the final rest in this life, help us through the unrest and anxiety you allow to fall upon us. Comfort us with your promise: In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Lord Jesus, give us this peace now and for ever. Amen.

4. The Lord's Prayer.

5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SATURDAY EVENING, THIRD WEEK

1. Bible reading.

2. Prayer: O Lord, Father in heaven. We thank you that you have helped us through the cares of this week. Bless what we have tried to do. Watch over us during the coming night. When the new day comes, let it be a day of rest for our bodies and souls. Bless it for ourselves, for our near and dear ones, for our Christian community and for your Church all over the world. Open to us the Word which is able to save our souls. Let your Holy Spirit open our hearts that we may see our sins, but also find the forgiveness in Jesus' name. O Lord, help many to take their refuge in your Church against the powers of evil and death. Amen.

3. The evening prayer.

4. The Benediction.

5. Hymn.

SUNDAY MORNING, FOURTH WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we thank you for this new day of rest, for your holy Word and for the fellowship of your holy Christian church. Bless our services and our prayers. Bless all those who will come to the Holy table today. Let them rejoice at your grace, when you meet them there and give yourself to them, in, with, and under bread and wine. We also pray for our people and our country that many may understand the blessing of having your Church, the Word and the holy sacraments in their midst. Lead them onto the good way. O Saviour, thus help us and bless us in your own holy name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SUNDAY EVENING, FOURTH WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for the fellowship with all Christians, wherever they are. Lead us all into a deeper understanding of your holy Word, your holy Christian church, and the mysteries of salvation. We know that there is much weakness and many failures on our side and that many Christians have a poor understanding of your ways and your holy will. Therefore bring us nearer to you, to our Saviour Jesus Christ, and to the fellowship in your Holy Spirit. Thus let the vision of the one, true, holy and apostolic Church always be living in our hearts and lives. We pray you in the blessed name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

MONDAY MORNING, FOURTH WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: O Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we thank you that you have come to this world to make us all the children of God. Create in us, through your Word and your Holy Spirit, the true childhood, that we may have the true spirit of this childhood and always be able to cry: ABBA! FATHER! O Lord, also help us to give praise to you and to your heavenly Father, not by words only, but by being the children of light, that it may be seen that we are your disciples and that we walk in your light. We pray you, dear Saviour, in your own holy name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

MONDAY EVENING, FOURTH WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for the love and mercy you have shown us up to this day. When the night comes we commend into your almighty hands our bodies and souls. Still more we wish to commend ourselves into your hands with regard to our yet unseen days and years. Whatever will meet us, sorrow or joy, failure or success in outward ways, let us remain in your hands. If we shall ever come into great distress, let us fall into your hands, for your mercy is great. Let us not fall into the hands of man. Lord, let your mercy always be with us, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

TUESDAY MORNING, FOURTH WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: O merciful Father, Creator of heaven and earth. We pray you for a blessed fellowship with all other Christians. But we often have to deal with such people who do not believe in you. In all those matters help us to be your true witnesses. We also pray for our country, for its people, institutions and leaders. Remove all prejudices and all hatred. Instead create a spirit of understanding, consideration, fairness and justice. Especially we pray for all who are despised, offended and wronged. O Lord, have mercy upon us all, that our country may be a place where justice, understanding and love prevail. We pray you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

TUESDAY EVENING, FOURTH WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, Counsellor of man, we pray you to keep us near the ever flowing streams of life. Continue to quench the thirst of our souls with the living water. Also help us to remain on the one strong foundation of faith, our Saviour Jesus Christ, since there is no other name, under heaven given among men, by which we may be saved. But also continue to renew us in our hearts and lives that by a true faith and by good deeds we may always serve our Lord and Saviour and bring glory to His precious name. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, FOURTH WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Almighty Father, Creator of heaven and earth. We thank and praise you that the light of your holy Word is shining among us. We pray you to help and bless your servants, whom you have sent to bring that light to all those who sit in the region and shadow of death. Give them courage and endurance that they do not despair but instead carry on their work in your name until the day dawns and the morning star rises. Thus let your promise be fulfilled that the earth shall be as full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FOURTH WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, we pray you to give us an ever increasing spirit of love for our neighbour and our fellow-men. Because we have sinned in many ways in thoughts, words and deeds, we must ask for your mercy. But we also pray you, dear Lord, to create mercy in our hearts upon all those we find suffering. Show us what we can do to give them help, and how we should do it, in order that we may not offend them or hurt them, but give them true and real help. O Lord give us a little of that spirit and love that is in you, that we may share it with those who suffer. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

THURSDAY MORNING, FOURTH WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Heavenly Father, when we are going to our work and our duties today, we must ask for your help and blessing. Without your help we can do nothing. Without your blessing even our best work will be of no avail. But even when we seem to be successful we may do a lot of harm, to individuals and to the community. Therefore, o Father, save us from doing harm to those who depend on us. Help us to be useful, full of love, and more willing to give than to receive. Also help us to ask for forgiveness whenever we have done wrong. Father, in all this help us today, in the blessed name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

THURSDAY EVENING, FOURTH WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Jesus Christ, our Lord, when we look back on this day and on days gone by we must confess that we have failed in many ways, in words and deeds, in love and service. Forgive us all this, and help us in coming days to be more closely united with you in faith and love, and to live more willingly according to your holy will. Help us to become such Christians that truly testify to you, that are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. O Jesus, this we cannot attain with our own power. It must be accomplished in us by your Holy Spirit. We ask for this grace in your own holy name. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

FRIDAY MORNING, FOURTH WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: Eternal God, every perfect gift comes down from you, Father of light, with whom there is no variation or shadow. But there is one gift we need as your children, more than anything else: the ability to love you as our God and Father, and our neighbour as ourselves. O Lord, create us anew, equip us with a little of your inexhaustible love. Let it brim over in us and benefit our neighbour, our friends and enemies. Teach us more and more about the secret of love in all true Christians: they love, because you first loved them. We pray you to make us bearers of such a love, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

FRIDAY EVENING, FOURTH WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. You have come to cast fire upon the earth, and you wish it were already burning. We thank you that it has started to burn also among us, or else we would not even think of you or pray to you. But yet we are worried: What will happen to your fire in our hearts and lives? Will it continue to burn, or will it soon be put out? O Lord, let your Holy Spirit keep your fire burning among us and in us. Let it also cleanse us, and let it kindle new fires round us. Help us, o Lord, to be kept burning, until you return in glory. Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

SATURDAY MORNING, FOURTH WEEK

1. /Hymn and/ Bible reading.
2. The morning prayer.
3. Prayer: O Lord, merciful Father, we pray for this country. Make it a good and blessed country, a good home for all its citizens. We thank you for what we have inherited from generations passed. Help us to hand it over in good order to those who come after us. We pray for all authorities and officials. Help them to rule us and serve us with justice, always to the best of their knowledge and with a good conscience. Help us all to co-operate in building a good and God-fearing nation. Unless you, o Lord, build the nation, those who build it will labour in vain. We trust your power and mercy in Jesus' name. Amen.
4. The Lord's Prayer.
5. The Apostolic Benediction.

SATURDAY EVENING, FOURTH WEEK

1. Bible reading.
2. Prayer: Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, you have promised to come back in glory to judge the living and the dead. Help us, o Lord, that we may remain praying and watching for the signs of your return. Your time may be close at hand, but according to your word we do not know the hour, nor the year or day. Help us, therefore, to be ready any time it may please you to come. Help us to be longing for that day, without slackening in love or zeal. When your day comes, let us be ready to greet you, happily, triumphantly, because then our redemption is drawing near. O, blessed day! Amen, come, Lord Jesus! Amen.
3. The evening prayer.
4. The Benediction.
5. Hymn.

IV
ADDITIONAL PRAYERS
FOR SOME CHURCH FESTIVALS
and
PRAYERS AT SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Remarks:

1. The prayers for Church festivals may replace the short prayers listed above in Chapter II or be used together with them.
2. The prayers "at special occasions" may replace the ordinary prayer of the day listed above in Chapter III, when it is felt that a special prayer is needed, or be used together with the ordinary prayer.

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, we thank you that you are God from eternity and that you have become man to save us, sinners. We thank you for your grace and mercy upon us up to this day and that you continue to come to us day after day, in your Word and in your sacraments, and in the fellowship of your holy Christian church. We praise you that your steadfast love does not cease and that your mercy never comes to an end.

In this new Church year help us better to understand what it means that you are still coming to us and that your love does not cease. Create in us a stronger faith, a new hope and a new love. We also pray you to send a strong wind of revival among the dormant members of the Christian community. Let the hearts and consciences of many be renewed and refreshed, when you come to us again. Give them a stronger evidence than ever that you are among us and that your Spirit is still at work.

Lord Jesus, through your holy Word and with the power of your Holy Spirit help us all that we may well use our short and precious time of grace. Help us to be watching and ready. Either you come back soon for the last Judgment or before that time decide to call us away from here by our own death, let us be ready to stand before you. Let it be a moment, not of despair, but of eternal happiness and rejoicing. — O Lord, together with all Christians of the world let us celebrate a joyful and blessed Advent, to your glory and to our eternal bliss. Amen.

CHRISTMAS DAY

O Lord Jesus, we thank and praise your glorious name that once again we are able to celebrate the festival of your holy birth. When you came that first time at Bethlehem, you were not greeted by the rich or mighty, nor did they receive you in their beautiful mansions. First of all you came to the poor, simple and despised, such who had no standing in the world. We thank you, o Lord, for this wisdom and mercy. Now we can know for sure that you are the Saviour of all and that none is locked out because of his poverty or disability.

Come therefore, Lord Jesus, make your entry among all today. Let us all understand that you want to be our Brother, our Saviour and Lord. Let the star of your holy Gospel lead many to the place where they can find you and rejoice at your eternal majesty and glory. Thus let the true faith be born in their hearts. Also help them that they may start to love you and hereafter walk in your light.

Lord Jesus, we pray you to bless today your Church all over the world. Help her to witness to all people that today is born to them in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ, the Lord. Help all bishops, pastors and other witnesses in your Church to be true heralds of joy, that they may come upon the mountains to bring good tidings by announcing peace and salvation, when they say to Zion: "Your God reigns." – Prince of Peace, bless this Christmas for all of us in your wonderful and most blessed name. Amen.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Almighty God, heavenly Father, we do not know what is ahead of us. Any day in the coming year may become a heavy burden on us. In your great mercy all such things are hidden to us. Father, we thank you for the only thing we know about this new year: that your mercies never come to an end, that they are new every morning. Such is your faithfulness to us. Help us, therefore, to remain in your grace and to put all our trust in your faithfulness.

For the unseen days of the coming year give us, o Father, strength, wisdom and faith. Help us well to do our work and to fulfil the duties that will be put upon us. Give us the patience we will need. When the burdens become heavy and the days long and tiresome, then remind us that your patience is greater than ours, and that you are good to those who wait for you, to the soul that seeks you.

Father, we pray you to bless our home and all our near and dear ones. Bless the people of our country. Let their work prosper. Let the fields give their harvest in due season. Give us peace. Guide and bless the leaders of our country that they may favour justice, peace and fairness, and never side with injustice, prejudice or selfish gain.

In this coming year also bless the Christian work that is going on among us and in all countries. Let your Church be the herald of good tidings, telling all people: "Behold your God!" Let her strongly remind us that here we have no lasting city, but have to seek the city which is to come. O Lord, give us such a faith and such a spirit of pilgrimage that we forget what lies behind and press on toward our heavenly goal. Father, thus bless our new year in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE EPIPHANY

O God, Father in heaven, we thank you for the message about the wise men from the East, searching for the newly born King of the Jews. We do not know who these men were, but it is enough for us to understand that they were guided by their spiritual need and their longing for a Saviour.

We thank you, o Lord, that your messengers have brought the good tidings to us about the Saviour of the world. We do not have to go searching to find Him or to follow stars of the sky. We thank you that our Saviour is in our midst, in your Word, and in your holy Christian Church. Therefore help us to turn to your Word and sacraments, which are His manger among us. When we find Him there, then let us rejoice and praise your holy and blessed name.

The wise men offered precious gifts. Help us that we may not be ashamed of the poor gift we are able to give to our Saviour. Instead help us to be cheerful givers, because we know that you have first loved us and given us your inexpressible gift, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Today help us to remember all those who sit in lands of deep darkness and have not yet seen the Light of life. Make it clear to us and to many in our congregations that those people depend upon us, if they will ever find what we have found. Help us to bring to them your holy Word, which is the true star leading to Christ.

O Lord, create among the peoples all over the world a hunger and thirst for salvation. Send your messengers to tell them that the Saviour has already come into the world and that He wishes to make them His disciples and your true children. Father, bless this work in your holy Christian church in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY

Today, dear Saviour, you were wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Upon you was the chastisement that makes us whole, and with your stripes we are healed. You were oppressed and afflicted, yet you opened not your mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so you opened not your mouth.

Today, dear Saviour, you were reviled for our sake, and you were counted among evildoers and crowned with the crown of thorns. Today, o good Shepherd, you gave your life for the sheep. You were crucified with robbers, and your holy hands and feet were pierced with nails.

Today, o Redeemer, you fulfilled the work of atonement and reconciliation according to the promises of old. Thus you could say, before you yielded up your spirit: **IT IS FINISHED**. We thank you that everything that had to be accomplished for our salvation has been finished.

Today, when the sun was setting, your holy body was laid to rest in the new tomb in the rock.

Today, holy Saviour, we thank you for your great love for us, poor sinners, that you humbled yourself and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross. We pray you, o Lord, to show us our many and great sins. Make us truly repentant. Always help us to take our refuge at your cross. When we are in the deepest need of our souls, then help us to receive our consolation from your suffering, your cross and your death. Thus let us receive the blessed fruit of your suffering and become helped and blessed, day after day, through the power of your cross, until you receive us in your heavenly Paradise. Amen.

EASTER DAY

We praise you, our Lord Jesus Christ, because of your glorious resurrection. You have the keys of death and hell, because you have defeated these powers. You are the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the One who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens.

Now we pray you, o Lord, that you let us share your glorious resurrection. Also let us share the life you have won for us, when you defeated our enemies sin and death. Let this new life be at work in us through your Word and your Holy Spirit, that we may continuously walk by the power of your resurrection.

Lord Jesus, we pray you to help all who believe in you to live in the new light that started to shine the first Easter morning. Give them the new life which the death of the body cannot defeat. Help them that hereafter they will not fear their enemies sin and death. Instead help them to be in good spirits when they fight them, because they can know for sure that you have already defeated these enemies.

O Lord, come to us, as you came to your first disciples. Give us your peace. Let us remain in that peace until the end, and when you call us away from this life, then let us depart in peace, assured that you are the resurrection and life. And finally, when you come back in glory, give us a joyful resurrection. Then, together with the great multitude which no man can number, let us give you glory and honour and thanks, because by your death and resurrection you have given us entry into the eternal blessedness.

Hear our prayer, Lord Jesus, in your own glorious and blessed name. Amen.

WHIT-SUNDAY

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. We thank you that you have given your Holy Spirit to your Church in such a way that it can be clear to anybody that you are with us always, to the close of the age. We thank you that your Holy Spirit is present and working among us, to teach us, to admonish us, to console us, and to assure us of the forgiveness of our sins. We thank you that this presence of your Holy Spirit has been manifested to us, not only on the first day of Pentecost, but also in your Word, in our own baptism, and at your Holy Communion, where you have promised to give yourself to us.

Now help us to live in your Church as it is necessary for the children of God to live. Let every day of our lives be according to your holy will, that we may walk by the Spirit and not satisfy the desires of the flesh. Help us to live in a perpetual sanctification according to your word that without holiness no one will see the Lord. Therefore, dear Lord and Saviour, let your Holy Spirit show us our sins, that He may also, day after day, lead us to you, our Saviour.

Holy Spirit, Helper and Counsellor, come to us as you came to the first disciples. Create a living faith in us, and then continue to dwell in our hearts and to sanctify our bodies, minds and souls. Give us a living hope, that we may always rest on the true foundation that has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. In the same way lead all those who believe in Him, that they may be truly united with Him and remain true members of His Church. Thus, living together in one Spirit and in one true Church, we will be able to thank the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Glory be you, eternal God, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

TRINITY SUNDAY

Eternal God, you are inscrutable in your essence and in your ways. You would have been unattainable, if you had not revealed yourself to us. Now we thank you that in your unspeakable goodness you have revealed yourself as the heavenly Father, as the only begotten Son, and as the Holy Spirit, our Helper, Counsellor and Sanctifier.

Father, inconceivable in your goodness and grace. You are the Giver of all good gifts. You are faithful in all your words and gracious in all your deeds. You uphold all who are falling, and raise up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, you satisfy the desire of every living thing. But above all you have shown us your love and mercy when you gave us your only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

O Christ, the only Son of God, we thank you that according to the purpose of the eternal Godhead you became man to save us sinners from all evil, from the powers of sin, death and hell. We thank you for your righteousness, by which you have blotted out all our iniquity and now wish to make us inheritants of your Kingdom. O Lord Jesus, we thank you that though you were rich, yet for our sake you became poor, so that by your poverty we might become rich.

Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. We thank you that in the Church of Jesus Christ you are still at work among us. Create in us a true faith in our Saviour. Unite us all in a true fellowship with Him and with our fellow-Christians, that there will be one body and one Spirit, one LORD, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. Amen.

ALL SAINTS' DAY

Lord, Father in heaven, your Word tells us about your witnesses who have lived here before us and have reached their heavenly goal. They sing the praise of the Lamb, because by His blood He has ransomed men for you, from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and has made them a kingdom and priests to you. Eternal God, by your Word and Holy Spirit help us, who are still living here and still on our way to the city which is to come. Help us that there may not be in us an evil, unbelieving heart, leading us to fall away from you, the living God. Instead, let there be in us such hearts that live in you, hope for you, and remain assured that through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, we will be among those who will stand before your throne and serve you day and night within your temple. O Lord, let the example of all your saints encourage us to press on toward the eternal goal. In Jesus' name. Amen.

REFORMATION DAY

O Lord, heavenly Father, your Word tells us that we must all repent and that only he who through faith is righteous shall live. Father, bring these words to the bottom of our hearts, that we may understand what it means to believe, to be justified in Christ and to be truly faithful to your holy Word. Father, we thank you that in your providence and mercy you have repeatedly sent us witnesses who have pointed to your Word as the only reliable source of truth and to our Saviour as the only true foundation of faith. Now help us to live in a true and continuous reformation, that we may turn back daily and truly to this rock of salvation, Jesus Christ, because we know that the powers of death shall not prevail against Him. We pray you, Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

AT THE BUILDING OF A NEW CHURCH

O Lord, Father in heaven, unless you build this house, those who work on it will labour in vain. Therefore we pray you to be the Builder of this house. Let it rest upon the one true foundation, which is your eternal love in Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Let this building become a house where your congregation can meet, where your holy Word can be preached and where the holy sacraments can be distributed, to your glory and to the blessing of many. Help all those who will be baptized, taught and instructed here, to become living stones in your heavenly Church and a holy priesthood, ready to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to you through Jesus Christ, our Lord. And now, while the outward building work will be going on, save those who take part in it from all dangers and accidents. And when the building is ready, then let us praise your holy and glorious name. Amen.

AT THE DEDICATION OF A NEW CHURCH

Merciful God, Father in heaven. We thank you that in your great mercy you have let us come to this blessed day. What we have longed for and what we have been looking forward to has become true: the church we have prayed for is standing here. Merciful Father, now help us to be truly thankful, also in days and years to come. Let this church be a place where we come to listen to your holy Word, where we come before you in our prayers and praise and glorify your holy name. Let this church spread the light of your Word widely around that many may be drawn into your

presence and into fellowship with those who believe in you. Help us all to become true witnesses in this world and once, when our time in this world is ended, come before your throne and serve you day and night in your temple where you will shelter us with your presence. Amen.

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF A CONGREGATION OR A CHURCH

We will give thanks to you, o Lord, among the peoples, we will sing praises to you among the nations. For your steadfast love is great above the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. — Yes, we thank you, o Lord, for your mercy upon us. You have allowed your work to continue at this place through the years. Your mercies have not come to an end. We thank you for your holy Word, which has been preached among us, and for your sacraments which have been distributed among us. We also thank you for the fellowship we have had with each other, in prayer, thanksgiving and rejoicing, but also in suffering and afflictions that have come upon us. In all we can see your help and your blessing. Continue, o Lord, to keep your hand over us and over this place. Let your Holy Spirit continue to do His work among us, to your praise and glory, and to our eternal salvation. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF SOMEBODY'S BAPTISM

We thank you, o Lord, for the anniversary we celebrate today, when we remember 's baptism. We thank you that through your holy sacrament it pleased you to bring into your Kingdom of grace. Continue to bless (him/her) further by keeping (him/her) under your protection and guidance, that (he/she) may also continue to grow in love and grace and by a Christian way of living glorify your holy name.

We pray you, o Lord, for ourselves that you will help us to remain in the grace of our baptism. Do not allow us to turn away from your grace by thinking that we can manage by our own power. Help us, because of the washing of regeneration that we have already received, to live in a daily renewal through your Holy Spirit. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF SOMEBODY'S CONFIRMATION

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, you have given us great promises, if we believe in you and remain under the guidance of your Holy Spirit. You have said that if anybody loves you, he will keep your Word, and your Father will love him, and you will come and make your home with him. This is what you have promised your disciples many times, also at 's confirmation. Therefore we thank you for all the grace you have shown (him/her) in the year(s) passed. And now we pray you to be with us all in days and years to come. Help us to remain in your grace, to receive the teaching and admonition we need

from your holy Word and in everything be true members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, where you are the cornerstone. Thus confirm us all in the true and saving faith that will keep us in communion with you for ever. We pray you in your own holy name. Amen.

PRAYER BEFORE THE HOLY COMMUNION

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we thank you that you have called us to be your disciples and friends. We also thank you that you have called us to come to your Holy table, just as you gathered your first disciples in that upper room where you said to them: "Take, this is my body", and, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many." O Lord, it is beyond our understanding how you can come to us in this way, although you are in heaven. But it is enough for us to know that we are sinners and that you are the true Saviour. Now, o Lord, when we prepare to come to your table, make us humble and truly repentant, and ready to receive you. Assure us that our sins are forgiven, and then bless us when we continue to walk in your light and strength. Amen.

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF A MARRIAGE

We thank you, o God, most merciful Father, for your blessing upon us. Every perfect gift is from above, and so you

have given us health, prosperity and great happiness. In adversities we have met you have helped us wonderfully. When we remember what you have so graciously done to us, we also ask you to guide, help and bless us in days and years to come. Help us to remember that our marriage and our home are gifts, not to ourselves only, but /to our children,/ to our near and dear ones and to all those you have given us to love and serve. Everything is yours, therefore let it serve your holy purposes in this world and in the world to come. Also help us, o Lord, to remain in a true Christian faith and in perfect love and peace with each other, that we may live according to your holy will. We pray you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF SOMEBODY'S DEPARTURE

O merciful God, Father in heaven. Today, when we remember the departure of, we humble ourselves under your mighty hand. We know that life and death are in your hands. In your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for us, when as yet there was none of them. We thank you, o Lord, for the memory of, for (his/her) time among us, for (his/her) work and service, and for our fellowship with (him/her). From (his/her) departure, and from the departure of so many near and dear ones, help us to understand how short and few our days are. They are soon gone, and we fly away. O Father, let our fellowship with each other, during this short and precious time of grace, help us to be prepared for the fellowship with the saints, who have already reached the heavenly home, and for the communion with you in the eternal and perfect joy. Amen.

IN TIMES OF SICKNESS

Heavenly Father, your holy Word tells us that if any one among us is suffering, he should pray. Now we have this reason to come before you. Father, have mercy upon your child who is sick. Give relief in the pains. Restore the strength of body, soul and spirit. Give your child health again. Let the Comforter, your Holy Spirit, give a mighty consolation, to satisfy the innermost needs of body, soul and spirit. Father, you did not spare your own Son but gave Him up for us all, therefore help us to receive everything in His holy name. Since through Him we have obtained access to the grace, in which we stand, let our suffering produce endurance, that we may remain steadfast. Let this suffering be to your glory and to our temporal and eternal welfare, in the blessed name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

IN TIMES OF PERSONAL SORROWS

Father in heaven, you know the hearts of all men, even before they have spoken to you. You also know the sorrow in our hearts because of what has happened to us. We do not know how or why. Therefore, o most merciful Father, we cry to you in our anxiety and great need. We call upon you, o Lord, make haste to come to our help! Give ear to our voice, when we call to you. Lord, let not the flood sweep over us, or the deep swallow us up. At an acceptable time, o God, in the abundance of your steadfast love, answer us. You have helped so many before us and taken them out from the depths, then help us not to grieve as others do who have no hope. Lord, you can turn our mourning into joy, and comfort us, and give us gladness for sorrow. Therefore, o Lord, when this sorrow comes to an end, let us remain with the fullness of the blessing in Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

IN TIMES OF FAMINE

O Lord, most merciful Father, Creator of heaven and earth. We depend on your gracious gifts for our daily bread. O Father, look down upon us. Our country has been severely struck. The fields are dry. There is no harvest to be expected for a long time. Many are starving. Our children go hungry. O Lord, if you wish to punish us, what can we say against you? If you want to mark iniquities, Lord, who will stand? Yet, answer us, o Lord, for your steadfast love is good. According to your abundant mercy, turn to us. Father, we cry to you for help. Feed the hungry of this land, give relief to those who are crying. Once again, o Lord, let us wake up to a day, when we can thank and praise you because there is bread in our country. Have such mercy upon us, o Father, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

AFTER A DISASTER OR CATASTROPHE

Father in heaven, in this world there are so many things we do not understand. Why did this happen? Were those who died worse sinners than the rest of us, because they suffered thus? No, your Word tells us not to judge in that way. Instead, according to your severe judgment, we would all have died. Father, we all need mercy. Now have mercy upon all those who are suffering. Have mercy, give consolation and help to those who are now mourning their near and dear ones. Also help those who are trying to give relief. Bless all their cares, direct their hands, and let them find the best way of handling men and matters. Also help us to recognize our own duties in these matters, that we may be

ready to assist in all ways possible. And help us to remember, Father, that one day, maybe suddenly, we may be called to pass the border of eternity. Help us all to be ready for such a moment, in the blessed name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

IN TIMES OF GREAT NATIONAL DIFFICULTIES

Most merciful God, Father in heaven, we come before you in these times of extreme national difficulties. When our future is at stake, we turn to you as our Father and Helper. Only you can help us to move away from the precipice we are approaching. O God, now help us to see and understand what has brought us to this point. Help us to confess that we have sinned by internal strife and fighting for ourselves. Help us, o Lord, in these crucial times to come together, to start to understand and respect each other and together make the sacrifices which are needed to find our way out. Now help us, more than ever, to understand your holy will and the welfare of our country and people. Now help us to do what is right, that we may still have a future as a people and a nation. O God, have mercy upon us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

IN TIMES OF GREAT PERSECUTIONS

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, you are the Amen, the faithful and true Witness. You have given the perfect tes-

timony, suitable and valid for all times. We are always poor and weak witnesses about you in this world, but many are stronger than most of us. We understand this, when we get news about those in prisons and internment camps, and about those who are tortured and killed because of their Christian faith. These witnesses are our representatives, they are our hands and feet, our tongues and voices. When we are too weak to witness, they do it on our behalf. Now, o Lord, have mercy on all who are persecuted because of their faith. Give them courage, joy in their hearts, and the testimony of their conscience that will show them the right way of action. Lord, also have mercy upon all persecutors. Help them to realize that they serve an evil purpose and are the instruments of an evil power. Lord, have mercy upon us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

V
TABLES
OF
READINGS FROM THE BIBLE

On the following pages there are given two tables of Bible readings, table A on pp 103–115, and table B on pp 117–129.

Table A is arranged for *two* family prayers a day.

Table B is arranged for *one* family prayer a day.

The tables given here follow a certain Swedish tradition, but a number of changes have been made in both tables. Some of these changes have been made with the purpose of obtaining a more suitable division of the Bible chapters for the reading. In table B the right hand column, "Old Testament psalm", has been arranged particularly for this handbook.

Readers who wish to arrange their own table of Bible readings are advised to study the instruction given for that purpose on p 27.

N. B. For the abbreviations of the names of Bible books, see p 133.

A
TABLE OF READINGS FROM THE
BIBLE

(Two readings a day)

JANUARY

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Mt 1:18-25	1	Ps 1
2	Mt 2:1-12	2	Ps 2
3	Mt 2:13-23	3	Ps 4
4	Mt 3:1-12	4	Ps 5
5	Mt 3:13-17	5	Ps 8
6	Mt 4:1-11	6	Ps 10:12-18
7	Mt 4:12-25	7	Ps 11
8	Mt 5:1-12	8	Ps 12
9	Mt 5:13-20	9	Ps 13
10	Mt 5:21-32	10	Ps 14
11	Mt 5:33-48	11	Ps 15
12	Mt 6:1-8	12	Ps 16
13	Mt 6:9-18	13	Ps 19
14	Mt 6:19-24	14	Ps 20
15	Mt 6:25-34	15	Ps 22:1-11
16	Mt 7:1-11	16	Ps 22:22-31
17	Mt 7:12-23	17	Ps 23
18	Mt 7:24-29	18	Ps 24
19	Mt 8:1-13	19	Ps 25:1-10
20	Mt 8:14-22	20	Ps 25:11-22
21	Mt 8:23-34	21	Ps 27
22	Mt 9:1-13	22	Ps 30
23	Mt 9:14-26	23	Ps 31:1-8
24	Mt 9:27-38	24	Ps 31:14-24
25	Mt 10:1-15	25	Ps 32
26	Mt 10:16-23	26	Ps 33:8-22
27	Mt 10:24-33	27	Ps 34:1-10
28	Mt 10:34-42	28	Ps 34:11-22
29	Mt 11:1-10	29	Ps 36
30	Mt 11:11-19	30	Ps 37:1-11
31	Mt 11:20-30	31	Ps 37:30-40

FEBRUARY

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Mt 12:1-14	1	Ps 39
2	Mt 12:15-21	2	Ps 40:1-8
3	Mt 12:22-37	3	Ps 40:9-17
4	Mt 12:38-50	4	Ps 42
5	Mt 13:1-15	5	Ps 43
6	Mt 13:16-30	6	Ps 45:1-7
7	Mt 13:31-43	7	Ps 46
8	Mt 13:44-58	8	Ps 50:7-23
9	Mt 14:1-14	9	Ps 51
10	Mt 14:15-22	10	Ps 53
11	Mt 14:23-36	11	Ps 61
12	Mt 15:1-20	12	Ps 62
13	Mt 15:21-39	13	Ps 63
14	Mt 16:1-12	14	Ps 65
15	Mt 16:13-20	15	Ps 66:8-20
16	Mt 16:21-28	16	Ps 67
17	Mt 17:1-13	17	Ps 70
18	Mt 17:14-27	18	Ps 71:1-12
19	Mt 18:1-14	19	Ps 71:17-24
20	Mt 18:15-22	20	Ps 72
21	Mt 18:23-35	21	Ps 73:1-12, 23-28
22	Mt 19:1-15	22	Ps 75
23	Mt 19:16-30	23	Ps 77:1-12
24	Mt 20:1-16	24	Ps 81
25	Mt 20:17-34	25	Ps 84
26	Mt 21:1-13	26	Ps 86
27	Mt 21:14-22	27	Ps 90
28	Mt 21:23-32	28	Ps 91
29	Mt 21:33-46	29	Ps 92

MARCH

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Mt 22:1-14	1	Ps 93
2	Mt 22:15-33	2	Ps 94:12-19
3	Mt 22:34-46	3	Ps 95
4	Mt 23:1-12	4	Ps 96
5	Mt 23:13-26	5	Ps 100
6	Mt 23:27-39	6	Ps 102
7	Mt 24:1-14	7	Ps 103:1-12
8	Mt 24:15-28	8	Ps 103:13-22
9	Mt 24:29-36	9	Ps 104:1-15
10	Mt 24:37-51	10	Ps 104:24-35
11	Mt 25:1-13	11	Ps 110
12	Mt 25:14-30	12	Ps 111
13	Mt 25:31-46	13	Ps 113
14	Mt 26:1-16	14	Ps 115
15	Mt 26:17-29	15	Ps 116
16	Mt 26:30-46	16	Ps 118:1-14
17	Mt 26:47-58	17	Ps 118:15-29
18	Mt 26:59-75	18	Ps 119:89-96
19	Mt 27:1-14	19	Ps 119:165-176
20	Mt 27:15-26	20	Ps 121
21	Mt 27:27-44	21	Ps 122
22	Mt 27:45-56	22	Ps 123
23	Mt 27:57-66	23	Ps 124
24	Mt 28:1-10	24	Ps 126
25	Mt 28:11-20	25	Ps 127
26	Gen 12:1-7	26	Rom 1:1-17
27	Gen 13:2-13	27	Rom 1:18-32
28	Gen 15:1-6	28	Rom 2:1-16
29	Gen 18:20-33	29	Rom 2:17-29
30	Gen 22:1-13	30	Rom 3:1-18
31	Gen 28:10-22	31	Rom 3:19-31

APRIL

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Gen 32:22-31	1	Rom 4:1-12
2	Ex 2:1-10	2	Rom 4:13-25
3	Ex 3:1-12	3	Rom 5:1-11
4	Ex 12:1-14	4	Rom 5:12-21
5	Ex 14:9-31	5	Rom 6:1-14
6	Ex 33:12-23	6	Rom 6:15-23
7	Ex 34:1-10	7	Rom 7:1-13
8	Num 21:4-9	8	Rom 7:14-25
9	Deut 32:1-12	9	Rom 8:1-11
10	1 Sam 3:1-10	10	Rom 8:12-27
11	1 Sam 16:1-13	11	Rom 8:28-39
12	Mk 1:1-13	12	Ps 128
13	Mk 1:14-34	13	Ps 130
14	Mk 1:35-45	14	Ps 131
15	Mk 2:1-17	15	Ps 138
16	Mk 2:18-28	16	Ps 139
17	Mk 3:1-19	17	Ps 141
18	Mk 3:20-35	18	Ps 143
19	Mk 4:1-20	19	Ps 145:1-8
20	Mk 4:21-41	20	Ps 145:9-21
21	Mk 5:1-20	21	Ps 146
22	Mk 5:21-43	22	Ps 147:1-11
23	Mk 6:1-13	23	Rom 9:1-18
24	Mk 6:14-29	24	Rom 9:19-33
25	Mk 6:30-44	25	Rom 10:1-13
26	Mk 6:45-56	26	Rom 10:14-21
27	Mk 7:1-13	27	Rom 11:1-12
28	Mk 7:14-30	28	Rom 11:13-24
29	Mk 7:31-37	29	Rom 11:25-36
30	Mk 8:1-21	30	Rom 12:1-8

MAY

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Mk 8:22-9:1	1	Rom 12:9-21
2	Mk 9:2-13	2	Rom 13:1-14
3	Mk 9:14-29	3	Rom 14:1-12
4	Mk 9:30-50	4	Rom 14:13-23
5	Mk 10:1-16	5	Rom 15:1-13
6	Mk 10:17-31	6	Rom 15:14-21
7	Mk 10:32-52	7	Rom 15:22-33
8	Mk 11:1-14	8	Rom 16:1-16
9	Mk 11:15-33	9	Rom 16:17-27
10	Mk 12:1-17	10	1 Cor 1:1-16
11	Mk 12:18-34	11	1 Cor 1:17-31
12	Mk 12:35-44	12	1 Cor 2:1-16
13	Mk 13:1-13	13	1 Cor 3:1-9
14	Mk 13:14-23	14	1 Cor 3:10-17
15	Mk 13:24-37	15	1 Cor 3:18-23
16	Mk 14:1-16	16	1 Cor 4:1-9
17	Mk 14:17-31	17	1 Cor 4:10-21
18	Mk 14:32-42	18	1 Cor 5:1-13
19	Mk 14:43-59	19	1 Cor 6:1-11
20	Mk 14:60-72	20	1 Cor 6:12-20
21	Mk 15:1-15	21	1 Cor 7:1-16
22	Mk 15:16-26	22	1 Cor 7:17-28
23	Mk 15:27-37	23	1 Cor 7:29-40
24	Mk 15:38-47	24	1 Cor 8:1-13
25	Mk 16:1-11	25	1 Cor 9:1-12
26	Mk 16:12-20	26	1 Cor 9:13-27
27	Is 1:2-9	27	1 Cor 10:1-13
28	Is 2:2-5	28	1 Cor 10:14-11:1
29	Is 5:18-23	29	1 Cor 11:2-16
30	Is 6:1-8	30	1 Cor 11:17-22
31	Is 9:2-7	31	1 Cor 12:1-11

JUNE

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Is 11:1-10	1	1 Cor 12:12-25
2	Is 12	2	1 Cor 12:26-31
3	Is 25:6-9	3	1 Cor 13:1-13
4	Is 26:1-8	4	1 Cor 14:1-14
5	Is 35	5	1 Cor 14:15-25
6	Is 40:1-11	6	1 Cor 14:26-40
7	Is 40:21-31	7	1 Cor 15:1-11
8	Is 42:1-8	8	1 Cor 15:12-19
9	Is 43:1-7	9	1 Cor 15:20-28
10	Is 43:16-25	10	1 Cor 15:29-44
11	Is 45:18-25	11	1 Cor 15:45-58
12	Is 49:1-10	12	1 Cor 16:1-24
13	Is 50:4-10	13	2 Cor 1:1-11
14	Is 52:13-53:12	14	2 Cor 1:12-2:4
15	Is 55:6-11	15	2 Cor 2:5-17
16	Is 60:1-6	16	2 Cor 3:1-18
17	Is 61	17	2 Cor 4:1-12
18	Lk 1:1-25	18	2 Cor 4:13-18
19	Lk 1:26-38	19	2 Cor 5:1-10
20	Lk 1:39-56	20	2 Cor 5:11-21
21	Lk 1:57-80	21	2 Cor 6:1-10
22	Lk 2:1-20	22	2 Cor 6:11-7:1
23	Lk 2:21-38	23	2 Cor 7:2-16
24	Lk 2:39-52	24	2 Cor 8:1-15
25	Lk 3:1-14	25	2 Cor 8:16-24
26	Lk 3:15-22	26	2 Cor 9:1-15
27	Lk 4:1-13	27	2 Cor 10:1-18
28	Lk 4:14-30	28	2 Cor 11:1-15
29	Lk 4:31-44	29	2 Cor 11:16-33
30	Lk 5:1-11	30	2 Cor 12:1-10

JULY

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Lk 5:12-26	1	2 Cor 12:11-21
2	Lk 5:27-39	2	2 Cor 13:1-14
3	Lk 6:1-11	3	Gal 1:1-12
4	Lk 6:12-26	4	Gal 1:13-24
5	Lk 6:27-38	5	Gal 2:1-10
6	Lk 6:39-49	6	Gal 2:11-21
7	Lk 7:1-17	7	Gal 3:1-14
8	Lk 7:18-35	8	Gal 3:15-29
9	Lk 7:36-50	9	Gal 4:1-16
10	Lk 8:1-15	10	Gal 4:17-31
11	Lk 8:16-25	11	Gal 5:1-15
12	Lk 8:26-39	12	Gal 5:16-26
13	Lk 8:40-56	13	Gal 6:1-18
14	Lk 9:1-17	14	Eph 1:1-14
15	Lk 9:18-36	15	Eph 1:15-23
16	Lk 9:37-50	16	Eph 2:1-10
17	Lk 9:51-62	17	Eph 2:11-22
18	Lk 10:1-16	18	Eph 3:1-13
19	Lk 10:17-24	19	Eph 3:14-21
20	Lk 10:25-42	20	Eph 4:1-16
21	Lk 11:1-13	21	Eph 4:17-5:2
22	Lk 11:14-28	22	Eph 5:3-20
23	Lk 11:29-36	23	Eph 5:21-33
24	Lk 11:37-54	24	Eph 6:1-12
25	Lk 12:1-15	25	Eph 6:13-24
26	Lk 12:16-34	26	Phil 1:1-18
27	Lk 12:35-48	27	Phil 1:19-30
28	Lk 12:49-59	28	Phil 2:1-18
29	Lk 13:1-17	29	Phil 2:19-30
30	Lk 13:18-35	30	Phil 3:1-11
31	Lk 14:1-11	31	Phil 3:12-21

AUGUST

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Lk 14:12-24	1	Phil 4:1-9
2	Lk 14:25-35	2	Phil 4:10-23
3	Lk 15:1-10	3	Col 1:1-14
4	Lk 15:11-32	4	Col 1:15-29
5	Lk 16:1-13	5	Col 2:1-15
6	Lk 16:14-31	6	Col 2:16-23
7	Lk 17:1-19	7	Col 3:1-11
8	Lk 17:20-37	8	Col 3:12-25
9	Lk 18:1-14	9	Col 4:1-18
10	Lk 18:15-30	10	Acts 1:1-14
11	Lk 18:31-43	11	Acts 1:15-26
12	Lk 19:1-10	12	Acts 2:1-13
13	Lk 19:11-27	13	Acts 2:14-28
14	Lk 19:28-40	14	Acts 2:29-36
15	Lk 19:41-48	15	Acts 2:37-47
16	Lk 20:1-18	16	Acts 3:1-16
17	Lk 20:19-40	17	Acts 3:17-26
18	Lk 20:41-47	18	Acts 4:1-18
19	Lk 21:1-19	19	Acts 4:19-37
20	Lk 21:20-38	20	Acts 5:1-16
21	Lk 22:1-13	21	Acts 5:17-32
22	Lk 22:14-23	22	Acts 5:33-42
23	Lk 22:24-38	23	Acts 6:1-15
24	Lk 22:39-53	24	Acts 7:1-19
25	Lk 22:54-71	25	Acts 7:20-43
26	Lk 23:1-12	26	Acts 7:44-8:1
27	Lk 23:13-25	27	Acts 8:1-24
28	Lk 23:26-34	28	Acts 8:25-40
29	Lk 23:35-46	29	Acts 9:1-21
30	Lk 23:47-56	30	Acts 9:22-43
31	Lk 24:1-12	31	Acts 10:1-23

SEPTEMBER

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Lk 24:13-35	1	Acts 10:24-48
2	Lk 24:36-53	2	Acts 11:1-18
3	Jer 1:1-10	3	Acts 11:19-30
4	Jer 9:1-11	4	Acts 12:1-17
5	Jer 20:7-13	5	Acts 12:18-25
6	Jer 23:1-8	6	Acts 13:1-12
7	2 Sam 7:1-16	7	Acts 13:13-31
8	2 Sam 7:18-29	8	Acts 13:32-52
9	2 Sam 22:1-7	9	Acts 14:1-13
10	1 Kings 3:5-14	10	Acts 14:14-28
11	1 Kings 8:22-30	11	Acts 15:1-21
12	1 Kings 17:1-16	12	Acts 15:22-41
13	1 Kings 19:1-18	13	Acts 16:1-24
14	2 Kings 5:1-14	14	Acts 16:25-40
15	Dan 9:1-19	15	Acts 17:1-15
16	Jer 29:4-14	16	Acts 17:16-34
17	Jer 31:31-34	17	Acts 18:1-17
18	Lam 3:22-33	18	Acts 18:18-28
19	Ezek 7:10-27	19	Acts 19:1-20
20	Ezek 11:14-21	20	Acts 19:21-41
21	Ezek 15:1-8	21	Acts 20:1-16
22	Ezek 16:48-63	22	Acts 20:17-38
23	Ezek 18:23-32	23	Acts 21:1-17
24	Ezek 33:10-20	24	Acts 21:18-40
25	Ezek 34:11-16	25	Acts 22:1-16
26	Ezek 37:1-14	26	Acts 22:17-30
27	Prov 3:5-18	27	Acts 23:1-15
28	Prov 6:6-23	28	Acts 23:16-35
29	Jn 1:1-13	29	Acts 24:1-27
30	Jn 1:14-23	30	Acts 25:1-12

OCTOBER

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Jn 1:24-34	1	Acts 25:13-27
2	Jn 1:35-42	2	Acts 26:1-18
3	Jn 1:43-51	3	Acts 26:19-32
4	Jn 2:1-11	4	Acts 27:1-20
5	Jn 2:12-25	5	Acts 27:21-44
6	Jn 3:1-15	6	Acts 28:1-16
7	Jn 3:16-21	7	Acts 28:17-31
8	Jn 3:22-36	8	1 Thess 1:1-10
9	Jn 4:1-15	9	1 Thess 2:1-8
10	Jn 4:16-30	10	1 Thess 2:9-20
11	Jn 4:31-42	11	1 Thess 3:1-13
12	Jn 4:43-54	12	1 Thess 4:1-8
13	Jn 5:1-14	13	1 Thess 4:9-18
14	Jn 5:15-29	14	1 Thess 5:1-11
15	Jn 5:30-38	15	1 Thess 5:12-28
16	Jn 5:39-47	16	2 Thess 1:1-12
17	Jn 6:1-15	17	2 Thess 2:1-17
18	Jn 6:16-27	18	2 Thess 3:1-18
19	Jn 6:28-40	19	1 Tim 1:1-11
20	Jn 6:41-51	20	1 Tim 1:12-20
21	Jn 6:52-59	21	1 Tim 2:1-15
22	Jn 6:60-71	22	1 Tim 3:1-16
23	Jn 7:1-13	23	1 Tim 4:1-16
24	Jn 7:14-27	24	1 Tim 5:1-25
25	Jn 7:28-36	25	1 Tim 6:1-10
26	Jn 7:37-52	26	1 Tim 6:11-21
27	Jn 8:1-11	27	2 Tim 1:1-18
28	Jn 8:12-19	28	2 Tim 2:1-13
29	Jn 8:20-27	29	2 Tim 2:14-26
30	Jn 8:28-45	30	2 Tim 3:1-17
31	Jn 8:46-59	31	2 Tim 4:1-8

NOVEMBER

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Jn 9:1-23	1	2 Tim 4:9-22
2	Jn 9:24-41	2	Tit 1:1-16
3	Jn 10:1-10	3	Tit 2:1-15
4	Jn 10:11-21	4	Tit 3:1-15
5	Jn 10:22-30	5	Philem vv 1-25
6	Jn 10:31-42	6	Heb 1:1-14
7	Jn 11:1-16	7	Heb 2:1-9
8	Jn 11:17-27	8	Heb 2:10-18
9	Jn 11:28-44	9	Heb 3:1-11
10	Jn 11:45-57	10	Heb 3:12-19
11	Jn 12:1-19	11	Heb 4:1-10
12	Jn 12:20-36	12	Heb 4:11-16
13	Jn 12:37-50	13	Heb 5:1-14
14	Hos 6:1-6	14	Heb 6:1-10
15	Hos 14:1-9	15	Heb 6:11-20
16	Joel 2:27-32	16	Heb 7:1-17
17	Amos 4:6-13	17	Heb 7:18-28
18	Amos 5:6-15	18	Heb 8:1-13
19	Amos 5:16-24	19	Heb 9:1-14
20	Amos 9:5-12	20	Heb 9:15-28
21	Jonah 3	21	Heb 10:1-18
22	Micah 4:1-7	22	Heb 10:19-39
23	Micah 6:1-8	23	Heb 11:1-12
24	Micah 7:1-9	24	Heb 11:13-22
25	Hab 2:13-20	25	Heb 11:23-40
26	Jn 13:1-11	26	Heb 12:1-17
27	Jn 13:12-20	27	Heb 12:18-29
28	Jn 13:21-30	28	Heb 13:1-14
29	Jn 13:31-38	29	Heb 13:15-25
30	Jn 14:1-14	30	1 Pet 1:1-12

DECEMBER

Date	MORNING	Date	EVENING
1	Jn 14:15-21	1	1 Pet 1:13-25
2	Jn 14:22-31	2	1 Pet 2:1-10
3	Jn 15:1-8	3	1 Pet 2:11-25
4	Jn 15:9-17	4	1 Pet 3:1-12
5	Jn 15:18-27	5	1 Pet 3:13-22
6	Jn 16:1-15	6	1 Pet 4:1-11
7	Jn 16:16-24	7	1 Pet 4:12-19
8	Jn 16:25-33	8	1 Pet 5:1-14
9	Jn 17:1-8	9	1 Jn 1:1-10
10	Jn 17:9-19	10	1 Jn 2:1-14
11	Jn 17:20-26	11	1 Jn 2:15-29
12	Jn 18:1-11	12	1 Jn 3:1-12
13	Jn 18:12-18	13	1 Jn 3:13-24
14	Jn 18:19-27	14	1 Jn 4:1-10
15	Jn 18:28-40	15	1 Jn 4:11-21
16	Jn 19:1-11	16	1 Jn 5:1-12
17	Jn 19:12-18	17	1 Jn 5:13-21
18	Jn 19:19-27	18	Jas 1:1-15
19	Jn 19:28-42	19	Jas 1:16-27
20	Jn 20:1-10	20	Jas 2:1-13
21	Jn 20:11-18	21	Jas 2:14-26
22	Jn 20:19-31	22	Jas 3:1-18
23	Jn 21:1-14	23	Jas 4:1-17
24	Jn 21:15-25	24	Jas 5:1-8
25	Zeph 1:14-2:3	25	Jas 5:9-20
26	Zeph 3:9-20	26	Rev 1:1-8
27	Zech 7:9-14	27	Rev 2:1-11
28	Zech 8:7-17	28	Rev 5:1-14
29	Zech 9:9-17	29	Rev 7:9-17
30	Mal 3:1-4	30	Rev 21:1-7
31	Mal 3:13-18	31	Rev 22:10-17

B
TABLE OF READINGS FROM THE
BIBLE

(Bible reading only once a day. — The short text from the Old Testament may be taken at the same time as the main reading, when this is found possible. The additional reading should then come first).

JANUARY

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Mt 6:25-7:12	1	1:1-6
2	Mt 7:13-29	2	2:1-11
3	Mt 8:1-17	3	3:1-8
4	Mt 8:18-9:13	4	4:1-3
5	Mt 9:14-38	5	4:4-8
6	Mt 10:1-23	6	5:1-3
7	Mt 10:24-42	7	5:4-8
8	Mt 11:1-30	8	5:9-12
9	Mt 12:1-21	9	6:1-5
10	Mt 12:22-50	10	6:6-10
11	Mt 13:1-23	11	7:1-5
12	Mt 13:24-52	12	7:6-11
13	Mt 13:53-14:21	13	7:12-17
14	Mt 14:22-15:20	14	8:1-4
15	Mt 15:21-16:12	15	8:5-9
16	Mt 16:13-28	16	9:1-4
17	Mt 17:1-27	17	9:5-10
18	Mt 18:1-20	18	9:11-16
19	Mt 18:21-19:2	19	9:17-20
20	Mt 19:3-26	20	10:1-6
21	Mt 19:27-20:16	21	10:7-11
22	Mt 20:17-34	22	10:12-18
23	Mt 21:1-22	23	11:1-7
24	Mt 21:23-46	24	12:1-4
25	Mt 22:1-22	25	12:5-8
26	Mt 22:23-46	26	13:1-6
27	Mt 23:1-22	27	14:1-3
28	Mt 23:23-39	28	14:4-7
29	Mt 24:1-28	29	15:1-5
30	Mt 24:29-51	30	16:1-6
31	Mt 25:1-30	31	16:7-11

FEBRUARY

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Mt 25:31-46	1	17:1-5
2	Mt 26:1-29	2	17:6-12
3	Mt 26:30-56	3	17:13-15
4	Mt 26:57-75	4	18:1-6
5	Mt 27:1-26	5	18:7-15
6	Mt 27:27-50	6	18:16-19
7	Mt 27:51-66	7	18:20-30
8	Mt 28:1-20	8	18:31-42
9	1 Thess 1:1-2:12	9	18:43-50
10	1 Thess 2:13-3:13	10	19:1-6
11	1 Thess 4:1-18	11	19:7-10
12	1 Thess 5:1-28	12	19:11-14
13	2 Thess 1:1-12	13	20:1-5
14	2 Thess 2:1-17	14	20:6-9
15	2 Thess 3:1-18	15	21:1-7
16	Gal 1:1-24	16	21:8-13
17	Gal 2:1-21	17	22:1-5
18	Gal 3:1-14	18	22:6-11
19	Gal 3:15-29	19	22:12-18
20	Gal 4:1-31	20	22:19-24
21	Gal 5:1-26	21	22:25-31
22	Gal 6:1-18	22	23:1-6
23	1 Cor 1:1-31	23	24:1-6
24	1 Cor 2:1-16	24	24:7-10
25	1 Cor 3:1-23	25	25:1-7
26	1 Cor 4:1-21	26	25:8-14
27	1 Cor 5:1-13	27	25:15-22
28	1 Cor 6:1-20	28	26:1-7
29	1 Cor 7:1-11	29	26:8-12

MARCH

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	1 Cor 7:1-24 (7:12-24)	1	27:1-5
2	1 Cor 7:25-40	2	27:6-10
3	1 Cor 8:1-13	3	27:11-14
4	1 Cor 9:1-18	4	28:1-5
5	1 Cor 9:19-10:13	5	28:6-9
6	1 Cor 10:14-11:1	6	29:1-4
7	1 Cor 11:2-19	7	29:5-11
8	1 Cor 11:20-34	8	30:1-5
9	1 Cor 12:1-31	9	30:6-12
10	1 Cor 13:1-13	10	31:1-5
11	1 Cor 14:1-19	11	31:6-10
12	1 Cor 14:20-40	12	31:11-18
13	1 Cor 15:1-34	13	31:19-24
14	1 Cor 15:35-58	14	32:1-5
15	1 Cor 16:1-24	15	32:6-11
16	2 Cor 1:1-14	16	33:1-9
17	2 Cor 1:15-2:4	17	33:10-17
18	2 Cor 2:5-17	18	33:18-22
19	2 Cor 3:1-18	19	34:1-8
20	2 Cor 4:1-18	20	34:9-17
21	2 Cor 5:1-21	21	34:18-22
22	2 Cor 6:1-7:1	22	35:1-8
23	2 Cor 7:2-16	23	35:9-14
24	2 Cor 8:1-24	24	35:15-21
25	2 Cor 9:1-15	25	35:22-28
26	2 Cor 10:1-18	26	36:1-6
27	2 Cor 11:1-33	27	36:7-12
28	2 Cor 12:1-21	28	37:1-9
29	2 Cor 13:1-14	29	37:10-20
30	Rom 1:1-17	30	37:21-33
31	Rom 1:18-32	31	37:34-40

APRIL

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Rom 2:1-16	1	38:1-8
2	Rom 2:17-3:8	2	38:9-14
3	Rom 3:9-31	3	38:15-22
4	Rom 4:1-25	4	39:1-6
5	Rom 5:1-21	5	39:7-13
6	Rom 6:1-14	6	40:1-5
7	Rom 6:15-7:6	7	40:6-12
8	Rom 7:7-25	8	40:13-17
9	Rom 8:1-25	9	41:1-7
10	Rom 8:26-39	10	41:8-13
11	Rom 9:1-18	11	42:1-4
12	Rom 9:19-33	12	42:5-11
13	Rom 10:1-21	13	43:1-5
14	Rom 11:1-21	14	44:1-9
15	Rom 11:22-36	15	44:10-16
16	Rom 12:1-21	16	44:17-26
17	Rom 13:1-14	17	45:1-9
18	Rom 14:1-15:6	18	45:10-17
19	Rom 15:7-33	19	46:1-7
20	Rom 16:1-27	20	46:8-11
21	Mk 1:1-20	21	47:1-4
22	Mk 1:21-45	22	47:5-9
23	Mk 2:1-22	23	48:1-8
24	Mk 2:23-3:12	24	48:9-14
25	Mk 3:13-35	25	49:1-9
26	Mk 4:1-20	26	49:10-15
27	Mk 4:21-41	27	49:16-20
28	Mk 5:1-20	28	50:1-6
29	Mk 5:21-43	29	50:7-15
30	Mk 6:1-29	30	50:16-23

MAY

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Mk 6:30-56	1	51:1-9
2	Mk 7:1-23	2	51:10-14
3	Mk 7:24-8:10	3	51:15-19
4	Mk 8:11-9:1	4	52:1-5
5	Mk 9:2-29	5	52:6-9
6	Mk 9:30-50	6	53:1-6
7	Mk 10:1-31	7	54:1-7
8	Mk 10:32-52	8	55:1-8
9	Mk 11:1-26	9	55:9-15
10	Mk 11:27-12:12	10	55:16-23
11	Mk 12:13-27	11	56:1-7
12	Mk 12:28-44	12	56:8-13
13	Mk 13:1-23	13	57:1-6
14	Mk 13:24-37	14	57:7-11
15	Mk 14:1-25	15	58:1-5
16	Mk 14:26-50	16	58:6-11
17	Mk 14:51-72	17	59:1-10
18	Mk 15:1-20	18	59:11-17
19	Mk 15:21-47	19	60:1-5
20	Mk 16:1-20	20	60:6-12
21	Phil 1:1-26	21	61:1-3
22	Phil 1:27-2:11	22	61:4-8
23	Phil 2:12-30	23	62:1-4
24	Phil 3:1-21	24	62:5-12
25	Phil 4:1-23	25	63:1-4
26	Col 1:1-23	26	63:5-11
27	Col 1:24-2:7	27	64:1-6
28	Col 2:8-23	28	64:7-10
29	Col 3:1-4:1	29	65:1-4
30	Col 4:2-18	30	65:5-8
31	Philem vv 1-25	31	65:9-13

JUNE

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Eph 1:1-23	1	66:1-7
2	Eph 2:1-22	2	66:8-12
3	Eph 3:1-21	3	66:13-20
4	Eph 4:1-16	4	67:1-7
5	Eph 4:17-5:2	5	68:1-6
6	Eph 5:3-20	6	68:7-10
7	Eph 5:21-6:9	7	68:11-18
8	Eph 6:10-24	8	68:19-23
9	Heb 1:1-14	9	68:24-27
10	Heb 2:1-18	10	68:28-35
11	Heb 3:1-19	11	69:1-12
12	Heb 4:1-16	12	69:13-21
13	Heb 5:1-14	13	69:22-29
14	Heb 6:1-20	14	69:30-36
15	Heb 7:1-25	15	70:1-5
16	Heb 7:26-8:13	16	71:1-11
17	Heb 9:1-28	17	71:12-16
18	Heb 10:1-18	18	71:17-24
19	Heb 10:19-39	19	72:1-11
20	Heb 11:1-22	20	72:12-20
21	Heb 11:23-12:2	21	73:1-9
22	Heb 12:3-29	22	73:10-20
23	Heb 13:1-25	23	73:21-28
24	Lk 1:1-25	24	74:1-11
25	Lk 1:26-56	25	74:12-23
26	Lk 1:57-80	26	75:1-10
27	Lk 2:1-20	27	76:1-9
28	Lk 2:21-52	28	76:10-12
29	Lk 3:1-22 (-38)	29	77:1-12
30	Lk 4:1-30	30	77:13-20

JULY

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Lk 4:31-44	1	78:1-4
2	Lk 5:1-16	2	78:5-8
3	Lk 5:17-39	3	78:9-20
4	Lk 6:1-19	4	78:21-31
5	Lk 6:20-49	5	78:32-37
6	Lk 7:1-23	6	78:38-43
7	Lk 7:24-50	7	78:44-55
8	Lk 8:1-21	8	78:56-66
9	Lk 8:22-39	9	78:67-72
10	Lk 8:40-9:6	10	79:1-4
11	Lk 9:7-27	11	79:5-10
12	Lk 9:28-50	12	79:11-13
13	Lk 9:51-10:16	13	80:1-7
14	Lk 10:17-42	14	80:8-13
15	Lk 11:1-28	15	80:14-19
16	Lk 11:29-54	16	81:1-7
17	Lk 12:1-21	17	81:8-16
18	Lk 12:22-40	18	82:1-4
19	Lk 12:41-59	19	82:5-8
20	Lk 13:1-21	20	83:1-8
21	Lk 13:22-14:6	21	83:9-12
22	Lk 14:7-35	22	83:13-18
23	Lk 15:1-32	23	84:1-4
24	Lk 16:1-18	24	84:5-9
25	Lk 16:19-17:10	25	84:10-12
26	Lk 17:11-37	26	85:1-3
27	Lk 18:1-30	27	85:4-7
28	Lk 18:31-19:10	28	85:8-13
29	Lk 19:11-40	29	86:1-7
30	Lk 19:41-20:18	30	86:8-13
31	Lk 20:19-21:4	31	86:14-17

AUGUST

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Lk 21:5-38	1	87:1-7
2	Lk 22:1-13	2	88:1-7
3	Lk 22:14-38	3	88:8-12
4	Lk 22:39-65	4	88:13-18
5	Lk 22:66-23:25	5	89:1-4
6	Lk 23:26-56	6	89:5-10
7	Lk 24:1-31	7	89:11-18
8	Lk 24:32-53	8	89:19-23
9	Acts 1:1-14	9	89:24-29
10	Acts 1:15-2:13	10	89:30-37
11	Acts 2:14-36	11	89:38-45
12	Acts 2:37-3:10	12	89:46-52
13	Acts 3:11-26	13	90:1-6
14	Acts 4:1-31	14	90:7-10
15	Acts 4:32-5:16	15	90:11-17
16	Acts 5:17-42	16	91:1-8
17	Acts 6:1-15	17	91:9-16
18	Acts 7:1-29	18	92:1-4
19	Acts 7:30-53	19	92:5-9
20	Acts 7:54-8:13	20	92:10-15
21	Acts 8:14-40	21	93:1-5
22	Acts 9:1-22	22	94:1-7
23	Acts 9:23-43	23	94:8-15
24	Acts 10:1-23	24	94:16-23
25	Acts 10:24-48	25	95:1-5
26	Acts 11:1-30	26	95:6-11
27	Acts 12:1-25	27	96:1-6
28	Acts 13:1-15	28	96:7-9
29	Acts 13:16-31	29	96:10-13
30	Acts 13:32-52	30	97:1-5
31	Acts 14:1-28	31	97:6-12

SEPTEMBER

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Acts 15:1-21	1	98:1-3
2	Acts 15:22-41	2	98:4-6
3	Acts 16:1-18	3	98:7-9
4	Acts 16:19-40	4	99:1-5
5	Acts 17:1-21	5	99:6-9
6	Acts 17:22-18:4	6	100:1-5
7	Acts 18:5-28	7	101:1-5
8	Acts 19:1-22	8	101:6-8
9	Acts 19:23-41	9	102:1-11
10	Acts 20:1-16	10	102:12-17
11	Acts 20:17-38	11	102:18-22
12	Acts 21:1-16	12	102:23-28
13	Acts 21:17-36	13	103:1-5
14	Acts 21:37-22:21	14	103:6-10
15	Acts 22:22-23:11	15	103:11-14
16	Acts 23:12-35	16	103:15-18
17	Acts 24:1-27	17	103:19-22
18	Acts 25:1-22	18	104:1-9
19	Acts 25:23-26:11	19	104:10-13
20	Acts 26:12-32	20	104:14-23
21	Acts 27:1-26	21	104:24-30
22	Acts 27:27-28:10	22	104:31-35
23	Acts 28:11-31	23	105:1-6
24	1 Tim 1:1-20	24	105:7-15
25	1 Tim 2:1-15	25	105:16-25
26	1 Tim 3:1-16	26	105:26-36
27	1 Tim 4:1-16	27	105:37-45
28	1 Tim 5:1-25	28	106:1-5
29	1 Tim 6:1-21	29	106:6-12
30	2 Tim 1:1-18	30	106:13-23

OCTOBER

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	2 Tim 2:1-26	1	106:24-31
2	2 Tim 3:1-17	2	106:32-39
3	2 Tim 4:1-22	3	106:40-48
4	Tit 1:1-16	4	107:1-9
5	Tit 2:1-15	5	107:10-16
6	Tit 3:1-15	6	107:17-22
7	1 Pet 1:1-21	7	107:23-32
8	1 Pet 1:22-2:12	8	107:33-38
9	1 Pet 2:13-3:7	9	107:39-43
10	1 Pet 3:8-22	10	108:1-6
11	1 Pet 4:1-19	11	108:7-13
12	1 Pet 5:1-14	12	109:1-5
13	2 Pet 1:1-21	13	109:6-19
14	2 Pet 2:1-22	14	109:20-25
15	2 Pet 3:1-18	15	109:26-31
16	Jas 1:1-27	16	110:1-4
17	Jas 2:1-26	17	110:5-7
18	Jas 3:1-18	18	111:1-10
19	Jas 4:1-17	19	112:1-10
20	Jas 5:1-20	20	113:1-9
21	Jude vv 1-25	21	114:1-8
22	Jn 1:1-28	22	115:1-11
23	Jn 1:29-51	23	115:12-18
24	Jn 2:1-25	24	116:1-11
25	Jn 3:1-21	25	116:12-19
26	Jn 3:22-36	26	117:1-2
27	Jn 4:1-30	27	118:1-9
28	Jn 4:31-54	28	118:10-18
29	Jn 5:1-18	29	118:19-25
30	Jn 5:19-47	30	118:26-29
31	Jn 6:1-21	31	119:1-8

NOVEMBER

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	Jn 6:22-51	1	119:9-16
2	Jn 6:52-71	2	119:17-24
3	Jn 7:1-31	3	119:25-32
4	Jn 7:32-52	4	119:33-48
5	Jn 7:53-8:30	5	119:49-56
6	Jn 8:31-59	6	119:57-64
7	Jn 9:1-23	7	119:65-72
8	Jn 9:24-41	8	119:73-88
9	Jn 10:1-21	9	119:89-104
10	Jn 10:22-42	10	119:105-120
11	Jn 11:1-27	11	119:121-128
12	Jn 11:28-57	12	119:129-144
13	Jn 12:1-19	13	119:145-160
14	Jn 12:20-50	14	119:161-176
15	Jn 13:1-30	15	120:1-7
16	Jn 13:31-14:14	16	121:1-8
17	Jn 14:15-31	17	122:1-9
18	Jn 15:1-27	18	123:1-4
19	Jn 16:1-33	19	124:1-8
20	Jn 17:1-26	20	125:1-5
21	Jn 18:1-18	21	126:1-6
22	Jn 18:19-40	22	127:1-5
23	Jn 19:1-24	23	128:1-6
24	Jn 19:25-42	24	129:1-8
25	Jn 20:1-31	25	130:1-8
26	Jn 21:1-25	26	131:1-3
27	1 Jn 1:1-2:6	27	132:1-10
28	1 Jn 2:7-29	28	132:11-18
29	1 Jn 3:1-24	29	133:1-3
30	1 Jn 4:1-21	30	134:1-3

DECEMBER

Date	MAIN READING	Date	OLD TESTAMENT PSALM
1	1 Jn 5:1-21	1	135:1-7
2	2 Jn vv 1-13	2	135:8-14
3	3 Jn vv 1-15	3	135:15-21
4	Rev 1:1-20	4	136:1-9
5	Rev 2:1-17	5	136:10-26
6	Rev 2:18-3:6	6	137:1-9
7	Rev 3:7-22	7	138:1-3
8	Rev 4:1-5:10	8	138:4-8
9	Rev 5:11-6:17	9	139:1-12
10	Rev 7:1-17	10	139:13-18
11	Rev 8:1-13	11	139:19-24
12	Rev 9:1-21	12	140:1-5
13	Rev 10:1-11	13	140:6-13
14	Rev 11:1-19	14	141:1-4
15	Rev 12:1-17	15	141:5-10
16	Rev 13:1-18	16	142:1-7
17	Rev 14:1-15:4	17	143:1-6
18	Rev 15:5-16:21	18	143:7-12
19	Rev 17:1-18	19	144:1-8
20	Rev 18:1-24	20	144:9-15
21	Rev 19:1-21	21	145:1-7
22	Rev 20:1-21:4	22	145:8-12
23	Rev 21:5-27	23	145:13-21
24	Rev 22:1-21	24	146:1-10
25	Mt 1:(1-17)18-25	25	147:1-6
26	Mt 2:1-23	26	147:7-11
27	Mt 3:1-17	27	147:12-20
28	Mt 4:1-25	28	148:1-6
29	Mt 5:1-26	29	148:7-14
30	Mt 5:27-48	30	149:1-9
31	Mt 6:1-24	31	150:1-6

VI THE EVERYDAY PRAYERS

The morning prayer I give thanks unto you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have protected me through the night from all danger and harm. I beseech you to preserve and keep me this day from all sin and evil, that in all my thoughts, words and deeds I may serve and please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all that is mine. Let your holy angels have charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. Amen.

The Lord's prayer 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 Apostolic Benediction The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

The evening prayer I give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have this day so graciously protected me. I beseech you to forgive me all my sins and the wrong which I have done, and by your great mercy defend me from all the perils and dangers of this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all that is mine. Let your holy angels have

charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. Amen.

The Benediction The Lord bless us, and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us, and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up His countenance upon us, and give us peace.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ABBREVIATIONS OF THE NAMES OF SOME BIBLE BOOKS

Col	Colossians	Mal	Malachi
1 Cor	1 Corinthians	Mk	Mark
2 Cor	2 Corinthians	Mt	Matthew
		Num	Numbers
Dan	Daniel	1 Pet	1 Peter
Deut	Deuteronomy	2 Pet	2 Peter
Eph	Ephesians	Phil	Philippians
Ex	Exodus	Philem	Philemon
Ezek	Ezekiel	Prov	Proverbs
		Ps	Psalms
Gal	Galatians	Rev	Revelation
Gen	Genesis	Rom	Romans
Hab	Habakkuk		
Heb	Hebrews	1 Sam	1 Samuel
Hos	Hosea	2 Sam	2 Samuel
Is	Isaiah	1 Thess	1 Thessalonians
		2 Thess	2 Thessalonians
Jas	James	1 Tim	1 Timothy
Jer	Jeremiah	2 Tim	2 Timothy
Jn	John (Gospel)	Tit	Titus
1 Jn	1 John		
2 Jn	2 John	Zech	Zechariah
3 Jn	3 John	Zeph	Zephaniah
Lam	Lamentations		
Lk	Luke		

N.B. Some short names, e.g. Acts, Jude, Kings and Micah, are not abbreviated but given in full.

EVERYDAY PRAYERS

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The Apostolic Benediction The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.