

INSTRUCTIONS: The underlined text are headings and do not need to be read. [Brackets] are instructions to be followed but not necessarily read. **FOR INDIVIDUAL PRAYER:** I suggest you read the prayer sheet aloud, but reading silently is fine too. **FOR GROUP PRAYER:** have one person act as leader. The leader reads the regular print and everyone reads the ***Bold Italic Type*** together.

**Daily Prayer for the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of Advent**  
**www.HopeForNiagara.org**

Opening Sentences:

God of promise, you have given us a sign of your love through the gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who was promised from ages past.<sup>ff</sup>



Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God...As many of you were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek...no longer slave or free...no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus...heirs according to the promise. (Gal. 3:23-29)...'in you all of the families of the earth shall be blessed.' (God's promise to Abraham, Gen. 12:3)

Praying Together:

Lord, open our lips.

***Our mouth shall proclaim your praise. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.***

Confession: (St. Augustine\*)

O Lord, the house of our soul is narrow; enlarge it that thou may enter in.

***It is ruinous, O repair it!***

It displeases your sight; we confess it, we know. But who shall cleanse it, or to whom shall we cry but unto you?

***Cleanse us from our secret faults, O Lord, and spare your servants from strange sins.***

From Psalm 96:

Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar. And all that fills it; let the field exult and everything in it.

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**Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth.**

[Silent Prayer; or Music may be listened to; or a Hymn is sung.]

Prayers of the People: (Frederick Buechner, *The Hungering Dark*\*\*)

‘Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Son of the Most High, Prince of Peace, be born again into our world. Wherever there is war,’

**Come, thou holy child of peace, with healing in thy wings**

[Silent Prayer]

“Wherever there is loneliness, wherever there is no hope,

**Come, thou long-expected one, with healing in thy wings.”**

[Silent Prayer]

“Holy Child, whom the shepherds and the kings and the dumb beasts adored, be born again.”

**Come thou Son of all creation, with healing in thy wings.**

[Silent Prayer]

“Wherever there is boredom, wherever there is fear of failure, wherever there is temptation too strong to resist, wherever there is bitterness of heart,

**Come, thou blessed one, with healing in thy wings.”**

[Silent Prayer]

Hear us as we pray together:

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing prayer:

As we wait with earnest longing and eager expectation for the labor to begin, we pray your steadfast love that we prepare with joy and hope to welcome the child, conceived of the holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary. “Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.” **Amen.**

\*Job & Shawchuck, *A Guide to Prayer For Ministers & Other Servants*, p. 39

\*\*Job & Shawchuck, *A Guide to Prayer For All God’s People*, p. 48

† From Revised Common Lectionary Prayers, Consultation on Common Texts.

Image: Annunciation by Greco, 1541?-1614. From Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48062>

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