

SMALL PRAYER GROUPS
Prayer Gathering for December 4

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**God of All the Ages
you call each one of us by name
and invite us on the path that leads to life.
Be with us as we face our weaknesses and flaws,
and give us hearts that desire to leave this world better than we found it.
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

SHARING QUESTIONS

*“Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid...
The cow and the bear shall be neighbors... the lion shall eat hay like the ox.
We live in times of great division; divisions between nations... within societies... and even
within families. What division do you hope to live long enough to see overcome?”*

*“Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not presume to say to
yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God can raise up children to
Abraham from these stones.*

**Many people carry a membership card to a religion, but don’t show evidence of it in
their lives. Where does someone begin? What would you recommend as a first step
to produce and show some fruit? What would be the next step after that?**

POSTED RECENTLY



Does being born into a Christian
family make one a Christian? No!
God has no grandchildren.

— Corrie Ten Boom —

DISCUSSION

“Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance.”
**Who comes to your mind as an example of someone who produces good fruit
because of their faith? How have they inspired you?**

LITANY

When I see injustice and decide the time has come to do something about it...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When I see someone is hungry and I realize I can help...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When I stop worrying about what folks will say if I step into this role...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When the time has come to speak up... and I swallow hard and stand...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When I resist stepping into the spotlight and yield the stage to someone else...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When I resist the urge to isolate and reach out to someone else...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When I hear the “what ifs” rising up and choose to say “Let’s see”...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When I say no to what is easy and choose instead the path less traveled...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

When I get up off the couch, roll up my sleeves, and get to work...

...Lord, may my fruit be bountiful

OUR FATHER

[OPTIONAL] PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (St. Alphonsus Ligouri)

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.

I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already here, and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You. AMEN.

CLOSING PRAYER

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

READING 1

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

On that day, a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.

The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:
a spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
a spirit of counsel and of strength,
a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD,
and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.

Not by appearance shall he judge,
nor by hearsay shall he decide,
but he shall judge the poor with justice,
and decide aright for the land's afflicted.

He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.
Justice shall be the band around his waist,
and faithfulness a belt upon his hips.

Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the young lion shall browse together,
with a little child to guide them.
The cow and the bear shall be neighbors,
together their young shall rest;
the lion shall eat hay like the ox.

The baby shall play by the cobra's den,
and the child lay his hand on the adder's lair.

There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the LORD,
as water covers the sea.

On that day, the root of Jesse,
set up as a signal for the nations,
the Gentiles shall seek out,
for his dwelling shall be glorious.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*

It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said:

*A voice of one crying out in the desert,
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.*

John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.

At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them,

*"You brood of vipers!
Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?
Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance.*

*And do not presume to say to yourselves,
'We have Abraham as our father.'
For I tell you,
God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones.*

*Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees.
Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit
will be cut down and thrown into the fire.*

*I am baptizing you with water, for repentance,
but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I.
I am not worthy to carry his sandals.
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."*

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ

Matthew, chapter 3