

A Devotional for Christmas Day

On Christmas morning, take a few minutes to reflect on the birth of Jesus and the powerful way that his birth has changed the world. This devotional guide will allow you the opportunity to read, reflect and celebrate the birth of Jesus in your life.

Read aloud or alternate with another person

Christ is born; give him glory!

Christ has come down from heaven; receive him!

Christ is now on earth; exalt him!

O you earth, sing to the Lord!

O you nations, praise him in joy, for he has been glorified

Psalm 98

This Psalm was the basis for Isaac Watts hymn, *Joy to the World*. As you read these ancient words, reflect on your own joy at Jesus' birth! What is your favorite Christmas carol to express your own joy?

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things;
his right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.

² The LORD has made his salvation known
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.

³ He has remembered his love
and his faithfulness to Israel;
all the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

⁴ Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth,
burst into jubilant song with music;

⁵ make music to the LORD with the harp,
with the harp and the sound of singing,

⁶ with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—
shout for joy before the LORD, the King.

⁷ Let the sea resound, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it.

⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands,
let the mountains sing together for joy;

⁹ let them sing before the LORD,
for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples with equity.

A Christmas Prayer

It may seem naive,
in a world of grief,
to choose to live in joy;

It may seem foolish,
in a world where solemnity is power,
to sing and dance to a different tune;

It may seem cruel,
in a world of suffering and injustice,
to speak of light and celebration;

But you have come, Jesus,
to bring joy into our grief,
light into our darkness,
singing into our mourning;
and it is an act of healing and proclamation
to believe and embrace the joy you offer.

Joy to the world!
The Lord is come!
Hallelujah!

Amen.

The Christmas Story

Read Luke 2:1-20

Reflect

There are many different people who appear in the Christmas story. Some have major roles, Mary, others are merely a footnote to history, Caesar Augustus.

Who do you relate to in the story? Why?

Think about a long journey that you have taken which led to a joyful experience at the end. Maybe a vacation which began with a long car ride or a move that took you to a new community. From your experience, reflect on how Mary and Joseph felt on the night Jesus was born.

How does the final outcome make the journey worthwhile?

Imagine that you are one of the shepherds. You are the first to hear of Jesus' birth. You are the first to lay eyes on this new born savior.

How did the shepherds respond? How would you respond?

Mary 'treasured and pondered' all of the events surrounding Jesus' birth.

What will you treasure and ponder from this Christmas?

In what way has your life been affected by your experience with Jesus during this Advent and Christmas season?

A Christmas Prayer

Lord God, Father of Jesus Christ,
be present, we pray, at our Christmas celebrations
which honor the birth of your Son,
and make them fine and full;
make our greetings sincere and our giving real;
make our eating and drinking a delight without becoming an excess;
enliven our relationships, both within our families and beyond them
with the spirit of the Christ Child. Amen