

Opening Prayer:

O Lord our God, you show your mighty power through your abundant mercy. you show your righteousness through your steadfast love. you show your love for us through the gift of your only son. Grant unto us, we pray, such a longing for your grace that we will seek you early and follow your commandments in faithful obedience. Then the grace of Christ our Lord, let us become partakers of your heavenly gifts, for it is in his name we pray. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer:

Our hearts are strangely warmed, O God, by all the sights and sounds of Christmas. The familiar carols and the sacred lessons remind us of that holy night when the One who made everything that is was born of a woman and cradled in a manger, was safeguarded by a poor father and sheltered in a stable.

Reveal ~~to~~ before this Christmas mystery, O God, ~~by all the sights and~~ give thanks to you for every reminder of your mercy. your boundless love has been manifested ~~to us~~ among us. Your ^{the} unassuming of your Spirit, grant to each of us this gift within - love that is pure, love that is blameless, love that is real, love that never fails. We rejoice today in the peace and joy

Of Christmas. Forbid that they should find room in our hearts only for a brief time. Rather cause the Spirit of Christmas to stay with us in all the ordinary places of our lives - in our poverty, our brokenness, our human frailty, and our responsibilities.

May all we do and say in the Christmas season bring honor to your name. Forbid that any of our festivities dishonor the Christ we adore and bring sadness to Countermund

his cheer. May the Goodwill and long friendships that have so faithfully changed our lives, our neighborhoods, these days we change us, that the birth of Christ become *nothing less than new birth for all who bear his name -*

Monday:

Burning Altar (Read I Kings 18:17-24, 36-39)

Tuesday:

Hammer and Sword (Read Isaiah 2:4; 7:14; 9:6-7)

Wednesday:

Heart and Word - God wants us to love and obey Him, not because he commands it, but because we want to. (Read Jeremiah 23:5-6; 31:31-34)

Thursday:

Den of Lions (Read Daniel 6:10-23)

Friday:

Trowel and Spear (Read Nehemiah 4:15-23)

Saturday:

Praying Hands - God promises to hear our prayers and to do those things that are good for us. (Read Luke 1:5-17)

PLEASE JOIN US FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL!

These devotions are discussed during Sunday Church School, 9:30 am.)

Reference
Jesse Tree Devotion
By Marilyn S. Breckenridge