

Thoughts and Prayers for Reflection

January 2025



What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb,

If I were a Wise Man I would do my part;

Yet what I can I give him,

Give my heart.

Christina Rosetti

1	The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus: Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time on and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised. <i>Psalm 113:2-3</i>
2	Basil of Caesarea (d.379), Gregory of Nazianzus (d.389) bishops and teachers. Eliza Hassall, pioneer of CMS (d.1917) missionary and teacher. God always was, and always is, and always will be. Or rather, God always Is. For Was and Will Be are fragments of our time, and of changeable nature, but He is Eternal Being. <i>St. Gregory the Theologian</i>
3	And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us. <i>1 John 3.23-24</i>
4	Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <i>1 John 4:7-8</i>
5	Second Sunday after Christmas: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. <i>John 1.14</i>
6	The Epiphany of our Lord: Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, man in God, God in man, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look, they believe and do not question, as their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die. <i>Peter Chrysologus (c.380-450)</i>
7	The first duty of love is to listen. <i>Paul Tillich (1886-1965)</i>
8	Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name. <i>Psalm 63:3-4</i>
9	For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. <i>John 5.26-27</i>
10	William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, martyr (d.1645): We are called to show utter commitment to the God who is revealed in Jesus and to all those to whom His invitation is addressed. <i>Rowan Williams</i>
11	I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. <i>Psalm 89:1-2</i>
12	First Sunday after Epiphany. The Baptism of our Lord. After all the people had been baptised, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my own dear Son. I am pleased with you." <i>Luke 3.21-22</i>
13	Hilary of Poitiers, bishop and teacher (d.367): The perfection of learning is to know God in such a way that, although you realise he is knowable, yet you know him as indescribable. <i>Hilary of Poitiers</i>
14	Sava, first archbishop of the Serbian church (d.1235): Give me to do everything I do in the day with a sense of the sacredness of life. <i>May Sarton, Journal of a Solitude.</i>
15	The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore. <i>Psalm 121:5-8</i>

16	For nothing is so pleasant to men as talking of other people's business, especially under the influence of affection or hatred, which often almost entirely blinds us to the truth. <i>Gregory of Nazianzus, The Orations.</i>
17	Antony of Egypt, abbot (d.356): "My secret is quite simple.....I pray!" <i>Anthony of Egypt</i>
18	Confession of Peter: " ...Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." <i>Acts 15:10-11</i>
19	Second Sunday after Epiphany: Like the Magi, may we also journey and be attentive, untiring and courageous on the path to find the invisible God who was born among us. <i>Pope Francis</i>
20	Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge. But he who hates correction is stupid. <i>Proverbs 12.1</i>
21	Agnes, martyr at Rome, virgin (d.304): My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. <i>James 1:2-4</i>
22	Vincent, deacon and martyr (d.304): But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers, who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. <i>James 1:22-24</i>
23	How I love to do your will, my God! I keep your teaching in my heart. In the assembly of all your people, Lord, I told the good news that you save us. You know that I will never stop telling it. <i>Psalms 40.8-9</i>
24	Companions of Paul, including Timothy, Titus & Silas: To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. <i>Titus 1.4</i>
25	Conversion of Paul the Apostle: As Saul was coming near the city of Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?" "Who are you Lord?" he asked. "I am Jesus, whom you persecute," the voice said. "But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do." <i>Acts 9.3-6</i>
26	Third Sunday after Epiphany, Australia Day: We bless you, God of the universe, for this land, for its contrasts of landscape and climate, for its abundance of wealth and opportunity. Bless us so that we might be a blessing to others. <i>Amen.</i>
27	John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople, teacher (d.407): If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the church door, you will not find Him in the chalice. <i>St John Chrysostom</i>
28	Thomas Aquinas, theologian (d.1274): May God the Son, who turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana, transform our lives and make glad our hearts. <i>Amen.</i>
29	True humility does not know that it is humble. If it did, it would be proud from the contemplation of so fine a virtue. <i>Martin Luther</i>
30	Charles, King of England (d.1649) Public reformers had need first practice on their own hearts that which they purpose to try on others. <i>Charles I of England</i>
31	Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity. <i>Simone Weil</i>

Prayers and Thoughts



- Sunday** In Sabbath time we remember to celebrate what is beautiful and sacred. If we do not surrender to some kind of Sabbath, how can we find our way, how can we hear the voices that tell us the right thing to do?
- Monday** Help me, Lord, to seek you in all the events of my life, to praise you in good times and in troubled moments. Encourage me to bear the crosses of my life as you bore yours – with courage and faith. *Amen.*
- Tuesday** Jesus, you told us to ask for all our needs. May we trust in your unchanging love for us. You always know what is best for us. *Amen.*
- Wednesday** For those who bring hope where there is none, love where there is hatred, peace where there is war, sustenance where there is hunger, water where there is drought and comfort where there is sadness, bless them Lord Jesus whether they be Christian, Jew, Muslim, no faith or any faith; for all love has its source in You. *Amen.*
- Thursday** Loving God, lead me to make choices that bring you glory and allow me to experience the life you intended for me. *Amen.*
- Friday** Oh, my God, how we have longed for redemption, for meaning, for you to make things right. Bless you for the wonders of your works – for the Child of Promise, the Man of Sorrows, and the King of Glory. On this day, I lay down my questions and give you praise. *Amen.*
- Saturday** Dear Lord, I pray that I can show mercy without judgement, compassion unconditionally. Lord, guide my hands to serve you. *Amen.*

Thoughts and Prayers for Reflection
for our *city on a hill...* and beyond.

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