

Prayer of the Church
First Sunday after Christmas
31 December 2023

Eternal Lord God, in the fullness of time, You sent forth Your Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us and give us the adoption as Your sons and heirs. Hear us, Father, as we call to You in His name. Give us grace to rejoice in Christ's blessed incarnation, and grant us a glad new year. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lead Your Church, Lord, to follow the example of blessed Simeon, that all baptized Christians would embrace the Christ Child by Word and faith, and so be ready to depart whenever they are called. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, from whom all fatherhood on earth is named, bless Christian families with Your promises. Give parents diligence and delight in their work, and grant Your favor on all children, that they may grow in strength and wisdom. Bless widows, orphans and broken families also with Your mercy, and give them joy in the redemption You have won for us in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O worthy Judge, from You proceeds the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Give wisdom to those who make, administer and judge our laws, that they may serve faithfully in their tasks, according to Your good pleasure and for the benefit of our people. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Lord, receive our prayers for those who suffer from loneliness. Comfort them with the sure and certain knowledge that You will never forsake them. Give them family and friends within the household of faith with whom they can find loving companionship. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed Lord, help the sick and suffering, especially those who desire our prayers. Surround them with Your love in Christ and, according to Your gracious will, heal them. Comfort those who mourn, and fill their hearts with the certain hope of the resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Father of lasting peace, show Your mercy to those who receive the Lord's Supper this day, that they would behold their salvation in the very body and blood of Christ given for them and, with St. Simeon, be well-prepared to depart in peace according to Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we here remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Praising His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**