

Week Four

Love is here, God with us.

I pray for the grace to know the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

and to love God back with the love God has given me.

Continue using the prayer template on page 3 to structure your daily prayer.

Day 1: Read Isaiah 43 aloud, inserting your name in the passage. What does it evoke?

Day 2: Read the passage again. Then, practice the “Sitting in God’s Loving Gaze” exercise.

Day 3: Read the passage again, naming your current *water*, *fires*, and *rivers*.

Day 4, Christmas Eve: Practice the “Sitting in God’s Loving Gaze” exercise. Return his gaze.

Day 5: Merry Christmas! God is with us! Blast a joyful carol like Joy to the World or the Hallelujah Chorus. The wait is over! He has come to us.

Thanks be to God.

Sitting in God’s Loving Gaze

an Ignatian practice

One of the sweetest, simplest ways to pray is to let God look at you. In the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius of Loyola encourages us to *practice* sitting under the loving gaze of God, imagining the Trinity watching us with unchanging love and delight.

This practice is a quiet consent: an act of being present to the God who is present to us. Few practices have tended to my heart like this one.

- **Pause.** Take a deep breath. Close your eyes. Let your mind and body grow heavy. Be still for just a moment.
- **Notice.** Become aware that you are in the presence of God and that he is looking at you with love. If it’s helpful, repeat this phrase in rhythm with the breath: (inhale) “I am in the presence;” (exhale) “of God’s loving gaze.”
- **Imagine.** Let your imagination explore the reality that God is looking at you, right here, right now. What does his gaze feel like? What does his face look like?
- **Enjoy.** Rest in the warmth of his love until you are satisfied.

Love Week

The Trinity & the Birth

But now, this is what the Lord says—

he who created you, (insert your name),

he who formed you, (insert your name):

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

When you pass through waters,

I will be with you;

and when you pass through rivers,

they will not sweep over you.

When you walk through fire,

you will not be burned;

the flames will not set you ablaze.

For I am the Lord your God,

the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...

...you are precious and honored in my sight,

and...I love you.”

Love is here.

