

# 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.**

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

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**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*

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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

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The Trinity & the Birth

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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.”

*Isaiah 43:1-3a, 4a*



Love is here.