



## READING THE BIBLE AS A FAMILY

**Your Goal:** Read Scripture together at least once per week. Feel free to sit comfortably in your living room, at your dining room table, etc. Take turns reading. When children are old enough to read, encourage them to read at least a few verses.

**The theme** for our selected readings during this pre-Nativity season is "**Prophecy and Fulfillment.**" The passages from the Old Testament show us how God created the world, and prepared for and announced the coming of His Son through the words of the prophets. The readings from the New Testament point to the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the womb of the Ever-Virgin Mary and how He was born in Bethlehem.

*Not sure where to find the Bible passages listed below? 1) Look up the **name of the book** in your Bible's Table of Content. 2) Find the **chapter**. Chapters are indicated by a number before the : and are represented by the larger numbers in the text of the book. 3) Find the **verses**. The small numbers in the text indicate the verse numbers.*

WEEK	OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT
November 15-21	Genesis, chapters 1 & 2	John 1:1-18
November 22-28	Genesis, chapter 3	Matthew 1:1-17
November 29-December 5	Isaiah, chapter 7	Matthew 1:18-25
December 6-12	Isaiah, chapter 9	Luke 1:26-38
December 13-19	Isaiah, chapter 11	Luke 2:1-20
December 20-26	Micah, chapter 5	Matthew 2



## CELEBRATE SAINT NICHOLAS AT HOME

**December 6th** (New Calendar) or **December 19th** (Old Calendar) is the holyday of St. Nicholas the Wonder-Worker. He is beloved of all Orthodox Christians worldwide, and is a special patron saint for children. Parents, make sure that "St. Nicholas" stops by to leave a special treat for the kids on December 6/19! Sing the popular hymn "O Who Loves Nicholas the Saintly" (on page 144 in the "Come to Me" prayer book) on the evening of December 5th and on December 6th.

# PRAYING AS A FAMILY

**Your Goal:** Offer these prayers at least once per week. Stand together as a family facing a place of prayer with an icon, etc. You may read them together, or take turns offering the prayers.

## Usual Beginning Prayers

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Glory to You, our God, glory to You!

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who are in all places and fill all things. Treasury of blessings, and giver of Life, come and dwell within us, and cleanse us from every blemish, and save our souls, O blessed One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us! (three times)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, cleanse us of our sins; O Master, forgive our transgressions; O Holy One, come to us and heal our infirmities for Your Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*three times*)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

## During the Nativity Fast...

*November 15-December 24 (New Calendar)*

*November 28-January 6 (Old Calendar)*

Today the Virgin is on her way to the cave where she will give birth in a manner beyond understanding to the Word Who is in all eternity. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when you hear it heralded. With the angels and the shepherds, glorify Him Who chose to be seen as a newborn Babe, while remaining God in all eternity.

## In Celebration of the Nativity...

*December 25-31 (New Calendar)*

*January 7-13 (Old Calendar)*

Your nativity, O Christ our God, has shown forth the light of knowledge to the world: for through it, those who studied the stars learned from a star to worship You, the Sun of Truth, and to acknowledge You, rising from on high; O Lord, glory to You.

## A Prayer for Our Family

Lord Jesus Christ, You reign on high with Your Eternal Father and the Holy Spirit. By Your presence, You blessed the home of Your Ever-Virgin Mother and the righteous Joseph. Come also to us and fill our home with Your blessings. We humbly pray to You: unite our family in a bond of peace and harmony. Instill in our hearts wisdom and virtue, and help us to obey Your commandments. Banish from us all anger and bitterness, and instead grant us a spirit of forgiveness and peace. Help us to be examples of Your love. In moments of trial and temptation, give us the strength to avoid sin. Send your holy angels to guard us from all misfortune and evil. O Christ, we enthrone You as King of our home: may we also be made worthy of a place in Your heavenly kingdom forever. Amen.

## Praying for Others

*If you would like to pray for specific people...*

Save, O Lord, and have mercy on (name anyone you want to pray for at this time).

## A Prayer to the Mother of God

Hail Mary, full of grace, O Virgin Birthgiver of God, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have given birth to Christ, the Savior and deliverer of our souls.

## A Prayer to the Holy Trinity

The Father is my hope, the Son is my refuge, and the Holy Spirit is my protection. O Holy Trinity, glory to You!

## Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the prayers of Your most-pure Mother and of all the saints, have mercy on us. Amen.