

DECEMBER 30, 2018  
FIRST SUNDAY  
AFTER CHRISTMAS

# taking faith home

*Jesus grows in wisdom.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 2:41-52	The boy Jesus at the temple
Monday	Ecclesiastes 3:1-8	Everything has its time
Tuesday	Proverbs 1:1-7	How proverbs can be used
Wednesday	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	Hanna visits Samuel
Thursday	Colossians 3:12-17	New life in Christ
Friday	James 3:13-18	Two kinds of wisdom
Saturday	Psalms 148	Let all things praise the Lord
Sunday	Matthew 2:1-12	Wise men come to worship Jesus

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor. **Luke 2:52 (NRSV)**

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Dear God, just as Jesus grew in wisdom and in a relationship to you and others, help us to grow in faith, hope, and love. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Lord Jesus, we thank you for this food that helps us grow and be healthy. Just as you were once a child, bring joy, love, and peace to all the children of the world. Amen.

### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the Lord give you wisdom and compassion as you grow in years and in your relationship to God and all people. (Luke 2:52)



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## HYMN OF THE WEEK

*O little town of  
Bethlehem*



## CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something you would like to learn about?
- How do you learn about the world around you?
- Jesus listened to teachers of the faith and asked questions. Who are some of your teachers of the faith?

## DEVOTIONS



*Read:* Luke 2:40-52.

Luke is the only Gospel that tells us about Jesus' childhood. It is not easy to understand how the Son of God grows up, but Luke makes it clear in 2:40 and 2:52 that "Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor." Growth is part of life. Jesus as a human being experienced growth, too. He asked questions. What questions do you want to ask at this point in your life? At the end of the story of Jesus in the temple at age 12, it states that Mary "treasured all these things in her heart" (v. 51). Earlier, as a response to the message of the shepherds, we learn that "Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart" (2:19). The mother of Jesus, too, is growing in her understanding of Jesus. Like the child Jesus, and his mother Mary, we, too, grow in our lives of faith. As you look at your life of faith, where do you think you have grown in wisdom and in your relationship to God and others?

*Pray:* **Dear God, help me to be open to your word and to the experiences around me, that I may continue to grow in love for you and in service to others, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## SERVICE



In the story of Jesus at the temple at age 12, his parents were not worried about their son as they returned home because Jesus was surrounded by "relatives and friends" (2:44). Parents need others to assist them in raising children. How could you help and support parents as they raise their children?

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



In Colossians 3:12-17 there is a beautiful passage that describes how Christians care for one another with love and forgiveness that reflects "compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience" (v. 12). Christians are to dwell in the word of Christ and to teach and correct one another with love and gratitude, in other words, not with arrogance or by bullying. A tradition for learning how to live the Christian life is to "sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God" (v. 16). The word hymn comes from Greek and means a song of praise. The music of the church is a gift that lifts our spirits and nurtures us in faith. Sing or pray the Hymn of the Week, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, and be aware of how hymns and songs can form us in the Christian life and faith.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)