

## Advent Calendar: Day 24

The reflections for this week are centered around the readings for this Sunday's texts  
Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:22-40

### Luke 2:34b-35

"This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

"Nails, spear, shall pierce him through. The cross be born for me, for you." These words seem out of place in a Christmas devotional much less a well loved Christmas Hymn. Isn't this a more appropriate time for silent nights and joyful gatherings around the arrival of new life. Yet these words come from a favorite Christmas carol, "What Child Is This" and remind us of the inescapable and essential reality surrounding Jesus' birth: that he has come to die for us. Christmas is often nostalgically celebrated in our hearts with the radiant light of the angels, the star's glow, and the warmth of a cradle filled with golden straw, but we miss the power of this night when we fail to recognize that God is giving His Child into the brokenness, sinfulness, and suffering of this world. In the midst of the beauty of Jesus' birth, the cross cast it's dark shadow. Even in the midst of Simeon's joyful soliloquy over Jesus' arrival, he prophesies concerning the opposition Jesus will encounter and the pain of the cross as it's agony will pierce Mary's heart too. Jesus is Born—YES!!! The Savior has come—YES!!! Just don't forget the price that He pays to be with us and save!

Of the many gifts you receive this Christmas, none have come with such a price and such a love as the gift of Jesus. Treasure the life and salvation He brings. Give thanks to God. Solo Deo Gloria!!