



## *Table Prayer for Christmas Day*

### GATHERING

*Long Is Our Winter* — a round

German melody; text translation: The Grail

1. Long is our winter, dark is our night;  
O come, set us free, O saving Light.
2. Long is our winter, dark is our night;  
Come set us free, O saving Light. (1 and 2 together)
3. Come, set us free, O saving Light!  
O come dwell among us, O Saving Light! (1, 2, 3 together)

OR —

### CHRISTMAS ANTIPHON

Verse: A people who walked in darkness have seen a great Light!

Response: **God of love, Creator of all, the darkness that covered the earth  
has given way to the bright dawn of your Word made flesh.**

REFLECTION: *The Meaning of Christmas* — Karl Rahner, adapted

Reader: Christmas means:

He has made the night clear!  
He has made the night of our darkness,  
the night of our lack of understanding,  
the cruel night of our fear and our hopelessness  
into Christmas, the Holy night!

All: **And so we rejoice!**

Reader: In the Word made flesh  
we have God's last Word,  
God's most profound Word,  
God's most beautiful Word  
and that Word means:  
'I love you,  
O World. O humanity!'

All: **So light the candles!  
They have more right to be here than darkness.**

### LIGHTING OF CANDLES

Reader: Today (Tonight), therefore, we light the lights,  
we chant our prayers and we sing our carols  
because we are celebrating God's passionate love for us,  
God's marriage to us in the intimacy of God's Divine  
Word becoming enfleshed in our own humanity.  
This awesome mystery beckons us to taste and to see  
your goodness all around us.

## THANKSGIVING

**All: In the peace of this season our spirits are joyful:  
with the beasts and angels,  
the shepherds and stars,  
with Mary and Joseph  
we sing God's praise.**

Reader: By your coming may all who hunger be filled with good things,  
and may our table and home be blessed.

**All: God of all gifts, we thank you for the many ways you have blessed us this day.  
We are grateful for each of those who are  
gathered around this table.  
We ask you to bless us and our food  
and to bless those we love  
who are not with us today.**

Reader: In our gratitude and love, we remember your humble birth into our lives,  
and pray for those who are without enough to eat.  
We remember the stable in which you were born and pray for those  
who have no place to live.

**All: We remember your challenging message  
of caring and giving and we pray for peace  
in families and nations throughout the world.  
We bless you and give you thanks in your Spirit  
who brings our hearts to life this Christmas Day and forever. Amen.**

*Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

