

THE CONGREGATION AT PRAYER

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

The week of Quinquagesima (50 days)

February 26-March 4, 2017

Catechetical Notes for the week: *The life of a Christian is a life of repentance, that is, dying to sin in confession and being raised in absolution. We live underneath God's forgiveness daily. Throughout this series, we've asked ourselves how each section has shown us our sins and called us to repentance and faith in God. Here we are taught that God doesn't speak His forgiveness in a vacuum, but through His minister. The minister is the mouth and hands of Christ, sent by God to speak God's forgiveness to us. Their authority comes from God. It is a male office because Christ is male. He is our Bridegroom who gives to His Church. The Church, the Bride, is female for she receives these blessings. Ministers are worthy of double honor not because of their person, but because of their Office. Daily they need our prayers so they might remain faithful. This section calls us to repentance for despising, degrading this Holy Office. We want them to be just like us, but God has placed them above us to serve us. It leads us to repentance and faith in Christ who always forgives us and restores us through His minister. The minister whose work isn't defined by forgiveness in Christ is not faithful to his calling.*

Theme: How grace is won.

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

APOSTLES' CREED

BIBLE VERSE: Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

<p><i>What is Confession?</i> Confession has two parts. First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.</p>	Preschool+
<p><i>What is the Office of the Keys?</i> The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.</p>	K+
<p><i>Where is this written?</i> This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven, if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."</p>	1st Grade+

<p><i>What do you believe according to these words?</i></p> <p>I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself.</p>	2nd Grade +
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DAILY READING		<i>The Story Bible</i> page
Monday	Exodus 3:1-22	101-104
Tuesday	Jeremiah 1:1-19	215
Wednesday	Acts 3:1-10	425
Thursday	Acts 13:4-12	445
Friday	Luke 10:1-17	361
Saturday	Genesis 3:1-21; 2 Corinthians 6:1-10; Matthew 4:1-11	(463)

Prayer:

Pray the Catechism: *(The catechetical notes are meant to assist you in this.)*

Example:

Repeat the teaching on the Office of the Keys

A teaching: Dear Father, in Confession and the Keys You teach me that You graciously forgive me all my sins for sake of Your Son through the mouth of Your called and ordained minister.

A thanksgiving: I thank You for blotting out all my sins through Jesus' blood and for announcing it to me continually through your human instrument.

A confession: I confess and ask for grace that I have despised the Office of the Holy Ministry and have failed to hear Your voice in theirs, Your action in theirs.

A prayer: I ask You to forgive my apathy and grant me a zeal to receive Your forgiveness through Your servant.

Personal prayers: *(suggestions listed below)*

Sunday: *Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for true and godly worship throughout the world; and for the faithful preaching and hearing of God's Word.*

Monday: *Pray for faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for your calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for government; and for peace.*

Tuesday: *Pray for deliverance against temptation; for the addicted and despairing; for the tortured and oppressed; and for those struggling with besetting sins.*

Wednesday: *Pray for marriage and family, that all may live together under the grace of Christ according to the Word of God; for parents who must rear their children alone; and for godly schools, our church schools, and seminaries.*

Thursday: *Pray for the Church and her pastors; for missionaries; and for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood.*

Friday: *Pray for the preaching of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for its spread throughout the whole world, especially in our community; and for the persecuted.*

Saturday: *Pray for faithfulness to the end; for the sick and dying; for the revival of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; and for receptive hearts for worship and study on the Lord's Day.*

Prayer for Quinquagesima

O Lord, we beseech You, mercifully to hear our prayers: and, having set us free from the bonds of our sins; defend us from all evil, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You, and the Holy Spirit; one God, now and forever.

Luther's Morning/Evening Prayer

Morning: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Evening: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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 forever and ever. Amen.