

THE CONGREGATION AT PRAYER

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

The week of Advent 4

December 18-24, 2016

Catechetical Notes for the week: *The third article teaches us that the third Person of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit. He takes the forgiveness Christ won and brings it to us in Word, Baptism, and Supper. He grants us faith to believe bringing us into the Church of God. The Church is all believers in heaven and on earth, made holy, nourished, and strengthened by the Spirit. He opens our eyes to see Jesus for us on the pages of Scripture. The Spirit never seeks attention for Himself, though He is the eternal God worthy of our praise and thanks, but He is always pointing at Christ, preaching Christ, serving Christ, bringing us all that Christ has won for us. He is often forgotten or overlooked, yet without His work the blessings of Christ cannot be brought to us today. He opens our eyes to see and our tongues to confess our sins. He creates a longing in our heart for the gifts of Christ. The third article squashes our pride lest we think we are part of the Church because of how good we've been. We have thought that we don't need His forgiveness, but rather need instruction on how to improve our lives. We've stolen His work and credited ourselves. It calls us to repentance and faith in the God who continues to forgive us, gather us, open our eyes to the Word, and keep us united to Christ.*

Theme: The Lord is among us.

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

APOSTLES' CREED

BIBLE VERSE: Ephesians 2:5 God made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

<p><i>What is the third article?</i> I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.</p>	Preschool+
<p><i>What does this mean?</i> I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.</p>	1st Grade+
<p>In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.</p>	2nd Grade+

DAILY READING

The Story Bible page

Monday

Luke 4:14-30

325

Tuesday	Genesis 50:15-21	91
Wednesday	Mark 5:21-43	336
Thursday	Genesis 22:1-19	61
Friday	Deuteronomy 34:1-12 (18:14-22)	130
Saturday	Micah 5:2-4; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-14	(John 11) 371

PRAYER

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

Example:

Repeat the 3rd Article

A teaching: Dear Father, in the first article You teach me that the Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, who takes the blessings Christ won and brings them to me. Without His work I would be eternal lost.

A thanksgiving: I thank You for sending the Spirit into my heart through the preaching of Your Gospel and Holy Sacraments to create and sustain my faith in Jesus.

A confession: I confess and ask for grace that I have trusted in my own Bible knowledge or heritage rather than in Him; and so I have neglected and view with indifference the Means of Grace and thus the Spirit.

A prayer: I ask You to not take Your Spirit from me, but to forgive me my sins for Jesus' sake, give me the Sacraments and so increase my faith.

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 Advent 4

Stir up, O Lord, we beseech You, Your power and come and rescue us by Your great might; that with the help of Your grace whatsoever is hindered by our sins may be speedily accomplished through Your mercy and satisfaction, 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.