

THE CONGREGATION AT PRAYER

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

The week of Oculi (Third Sunday in Lent)

March 3-9, 2024

Catechetical Notes for the week: *We use what Christ used: bread and wine. We do what Christ did: take bread/wine, give thanks, distribute it, receive it. Because of Christ's words, the consecrated bread is Christ's body and the consecrated wine is Christ's blood. This is not a metaphor, symbolism, or representative picture, but a reality. The blessed Bread is Christ's body. The blessed wine is Christ's blood. It is the same body that was born of the Virgin. The same body that was crowned, pierced, crucified. The same blood that flowed from His holy wounds. The same body that rose on the third day and ascended into heaven. It is the body of the omnipresent God, present before us to eat and drink. We cannot explain how, but we take Christ at His word for He doesn't lie. When He speaks we are certain of Christ's real, bodily presence. So each communicant receives by his mouth Christ's true body and blood, whether he is worthy or unworthy because the Word effects this union and not our eating. What a wondrous blessing: God puts Himself into us. It shows us that we have failed to view this Sacrament with dignity and the highest reverence. We have taken it for granted and treated it like attending any other memorial meal. We have gone through the motions and not prepared our hearts to receive our God into our bodies. It calls us to repentance and faith in Christ who continues to graciously come to us in consecrated bread and wine.*

Theme: Faith trusts in the Stronger One.

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

APOSTLES' CREED

HYMN: Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray

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

<i>What is the Sacrament of the Altar?</i> It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.	1st Grade
<i>Where is this written?</i> Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."	K+

DAILY READING		<i>The Story Bible</i> page
Monday	Luke 2:1-20	283
Tuesday	Luke 22:7-23	392
Wednesday	Luke 23:32-49	402
Thursday	Exodus 12:1-13	107
Friday	Luke 24:1-12	407
Saturday	Exodus 16:2-21; Galatians 4:21-5:1; John 6:1-15	(Acts 1:1-11) 418

PRAYER

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

Example:

Repeat the teaching on Holy Communion

A teaching: Dear Father, in Holy Communion You teach me that because of Your Word, the blessed Bread is Your Son's Body and the blessed Wine is His Blood, which we receive orally.

A thanksgiving: I thank You for instituting this Holy Meal where He comes to me in these humble means.

A confession: I confess and ask for grace that I have despised this Sacrament, viewed it as something extra and unnecessary, and have acted as if it were only bread and wine.

A prayer: I ask You to forgive my apathy, my negligence, and my irreverence toward Your Body and Blood sacramentally united with these consecrated elements.

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 the week of Oculi

We beseech You, almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of Your humble servants: and stretch forth the right hand of Your majesty; to be our defense against all our enemies, 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.