

THE CONGREGATION AT PRAYER

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
The week of the Laetare (Fourth Sunday in Lent)
March 10-16, 2024*

Catechetical Notes for the week: *By His holy cross, our Lord paid the full price for our sins, opened heaven, and won for us eternal blessings. Yet these blessings are not given or received at the cross, but in the Means of Grace. In the Holy Supper we eat forgiveness, we receive life, and we enjoy salvation in the most intimate of ways. It's a Meal with eternal blessings. It satisfies our hunger and thirst while filling us up with Christ and all He won. So this is the Feast of Immortality, the remedy against having to die, and foretaste of the heavenly banquet. This Meal sustains our bodies and souls unto life everlasting. We are certain we receive all this because we eat the very Body and drink the very Blood which won them for us. God puts Himself inside of us. God unites Himself to our flesh and blood. And God does not lie. Faith believes His words. Faith trusts that God will give what He has promised. So the mouth receives Christ, while faith believes the blessings. Those without faith in these words still receive Christ, but no blessings. They eat to their harm. It shows us that we have taken this heavenly Feast for granted. We have viewed it as just another meal, something we must do rather than a heavenly banquet given to us on earth for our good. We have not longed to eat and so we have despised our Lord and the eternal blessings He longs to give. It calls us to repentance and faith in Christ who comes to us in blessed Bread and Wine to give us His forgiveness, life, and salvation.*

Theme: Faith feeds on the Bread of Life.

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

APOSTLES' CREED

HYMN: When in the Hour of Utmost Need

BIBLE VERSE: John 6:35 I am the bread of life. he who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

<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+
<i>What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?</i> These words, Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins, show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.	1st Grade+

<p><i>How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?</i></p> <p>Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: forgiveness of sins.</p>	2nd Grade+
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Daily Reading:		<i>The Story Bible</i> page
Monday	John 6:25-59	358
Tuesday	John 2:1-11	307
Wednesday	Exodus 16:1-21	115
Thursday	Luke 19:1-10	383
Friday	Psalm 23	369
Saturday	Genesis 22:1-14; Hebrews 9:11-15; John 8:46-59	467

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 eternal blessings are given when I receive Jesus' Body and Blood.

A thanksgiving: I thank You this Holy Communion where You give me You eternal gifts in humble bread and wine.

A confession: I confess and ask for grace that I have not longed for these eternal blessings or have seen it as unnecessary.

A prayer: I ask You to forgive my indifference and create in me a longing to receive and then to rejoice in these eternal gifts as You give them.

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 Laetare

Grant, we beseech You, almighty God: that we who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished; by the comfort of Your grace may mercifully be relieved, 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.