

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
 For the Week of the Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
 February 5, 2012 through, February 12, 2012

Catechesis Notes for the Week—“**A Lover’s Word**”—This week we begin two weeks of meditation on Confession and the Office of the Keys. These headings from the Catechism might sound dry and sterile to some, but these sections are all about receiving “a Lover’s Word.” Jesus’ Word of forgiveness is a Lover’s Word—the Word of Him who loved us, His bride, so much that He laid down His life in death to cover the ugliness of our sin and rebellion against God. Just as the words of our beloved in marriage strengthens our relationship with our spouse, so the words of absolution from our Lover Jesus strengthen our relationship with Him. Even more than this, His Word of forgiveness makes us beautiful, strengthens faith against sin and temptation, and gives us comfort. What woman doesn’t want to hear the word of him who loves her? This is how we should view the absolution and preaching, and why we should learn to value it and long to hear it from our pastors.

The Order of Meditation and Prayer

Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate. Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.

Theme: Jesus’ Preaching Heals!

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Psalm 130:3-5

If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.

⁵ I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope.

Psalm: 147 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: O Lord Jesus, You take pleasure in those who fear You and in those who hope in Your mercy. Preach Your Word to us that we might know the power of Your love and the consolation of Your salvation, for You are the only true God and Savior who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	144	147	148	1, 2	5	8, 9	10	14, 15
Evening	145	146	149, 150	3	4, 6	7	11, 12	13

The Catechism: Confession and the Office of the Keys

<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>	Kindergarten +
<p><i>What sins should we confess?</i> Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.</p>	Second Grade +
<p><i>Which are these?</i> Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?</p>	Third Grade +

Readings for the week of the Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Day	Bible Stories for the Family and Academy	Daily Prayer Readings from LSB, p. 299	
Sunday	Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law—Mark 1:29-39	Job 2:1-3:10	John 1:19-34
Monday	Repeat Sunday's Gospel	Job 3:11-26	John 1:35-51
Tuesday	The Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin—Lk. 15:1-10	Job 4:1-21	John 2:1-12
Wednesday	The Parable of the Prodigal Son—Luke 15:11-32	Job 5:1-27	John 2:13-25
Thursday	David's Sin with Bathsheba—2 Samuel 11:1-27	Job 6:1-13	John 3:1-21
Friday	The Prophet Nathan Confronts David—2 Samuel 12:1-25	Job 6:14-30	John 3:22-4:6
Saturday	Look Ahead to Sunday's Readings	Job 7:1-21	John 4:7-26
Sunday	Look Ahead to Sunday's Readings	Job 8:1-22	John 4:27-45

Prayers: Collects for the Week, Daily Themes for Prayer, In Our Prayers at Peace

Collect for the week of the Fifth Sunday after Epiphany:

O Lord, keep Your family the Church continually in the true faith that, relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace, we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Daily Themes for Prayer

- Sunday:** *Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.*
- Monday:** *Pray for faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.*
- Tuesday:** *Pray for deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.*
- Wednesday:** *Pray for marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.*
- Thursday:** *Pray for the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deacons, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood.*
- Friday:** *Pray for the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.*
- Saturday:** *Pray for faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.*

In Our Prayers this Week

Judith Ebel, sister of Daniel Schmitt, undergoing chemotherapy.

Lord's Prayer and Morning or Evening Prayer from the Catechism

Hymn of the Week

"From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee" (Stanza 1-3)

Looking forward to the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

February 12, 2012

Hymns: 818, 394, 846, 528, 852

2 Kings 5:1-14: *The slave girl from Israel had compassion on her Syrian master Naaman the Leper. By confessing her faith to him, she powerfully showed forth God's compassion for Naaman and directed him to the prophet in Israel whose preaching of the Lord's Word could save and cleanse Him. Those who trust in the Lord's compassion in Christ, desire others to receive it too—even undeserving sinners like of the arrogant Naaman. Other servants also spoke to Naaman: Elisha's servant and Naaman's own servants. Again and again he was directed to let go of his pride and self-righteousness and receive the Word of God implanted in the Jordan River for his cleansing. Finally, by a miracle of the simple proclamation of God's Word to Naaman, he went into the Jordan River and was cleansed. Everything depended upon the Word of God—Naaman's faith and the cleansing of his flesh. So it is for us. Our faith and salvation are effected by the Word alone. Faith receives what the Word does.*

1 Corinthians 10:19-11:1: *In all that we do as Christians we are to act out of faith in the Lord Jesus and out of love for our brothers and sisters in Christ and for those who do not know Him. Paul continues his catechesis concerning food sacrificed to idols. Among other things he teaches a great deal about "table fellowship." When one eats at the altar of an idol, one is declaring His fellowship and agreement with the doctrine of that false religion.*

Mark 1:40-45: *In the cleansing of the leper, Jesus teaches us about the true nature of His work as our Savior. He touches the diseased and leprous man with His hand as a sign that He has taken all the uncleanness of sin and the corruption that sin brought into Himself. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, Jesus Himself "took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows." He was made to be "unclean" for us, that we might become "clean" in Him. When Jesus instructs the cleansed man to show himself to the priest as Moses commanded He is showing that He is both the fulfiller of the Old Testament Law and the source of new life and salvation.*