

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

For the Week of Septuagesima Sunday

February 5 through February 12, 2023

Catechesis Notes for the Week — God’s Blessing Is Always Anchored in His Grace — The narrative of Joseph’s sojourn in Egypt concludes this week with a clear and unmistakable proclamation of God’s grace. **Jacob’s Blessings Before He Dies** show how each of the twelve sons of Jacob are part of God’s gracious providence to the house of Israel. Each of them had his place. Each was called by God’s name. Each of them had their share in the blessing of God’s grace through the promise made to the fathers. **Joseph Continues to Show Mercy to His Brothers** by one final act of absolution. After the death of Jacob, Joseph’s brothers feared that he would take revenge upon them. He did not! But in the stead of the Lord of all grace, Joseph proclaimed the Lord’s absolution to them yet again, “Do not be afraid...you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive...do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” After centuries in Egypt, the children of Israel grew to the tens of thousands. A wicked Pharaoh began to oppress them and subject them to bitter bondage. They would learn through their suffering to cry out to the Lord for deliverance according to the promise made to the patriarchs. The **Birth of Moses** marks a new chapter in the history of God’s people. Moses would be trained in the household of Pharaoh, but he did not forget his people. At the age of 40, **Moses Flees to Midian** where he becomes a shepherd and marries Jethro’s daughter Zipporah. For the next 40 years, the Lord would prepare him to be the most important prophet in the Old Testament, the one who would lead the children of Israel out of bondage. Upon Mount Sinai, **I AM Appears to Moses in the Burning Bush** and calls him to be His spokesman before Pharaoh and the children of Israel. The time of their bondage was drawing to a close. The eternal God of the promise of salvation would make good on His promise and rescue His people.

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: God’s Grace Is the Measure of His Goodness!

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Psalm 51:17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
a broken and a contrite heart
These, O God, You will not despise.

Psalm 18:1-6 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm Almighty and most gracious God and Father, we implore You to turn the hearts of all who have forsaken the faith once delivered to Your Church, especially those who have wandered from it or are in doubt through the corruption of Your truth. Mercifully visit and restore them, that in gladness of heart they may take pleasure in Your Word and be made wise to salvation through faith in Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	125, 126	128, 129	131, 132	135	137, 138	140, 141	144	147
Evening	127	130	133, 134	136	139	142, 143	145	146

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Septuagesima: The Workers in the Vineyard—Matthew 20:1-16	
Monday	Jacob’s Blessings Before He Dies—Gen. 49:1 (2-27) 28—50:14	John 8:21-30
Tuesday	Joseph Continues to Show Mercy to His Brothers—Gen. 50:15-26	John 8:31-36
Wednesday	The Birth of Moses—Exodus 1:1—2:10	John 8:37-45
Thursday	Moses Flees to Midian—Exodus 2:11-25	John 8:46-51
Friday	I AM Appears to Moses in the Burning Bush—Exodus 3:1-17	John 8:52-59
Saturday	Sexagesima: The Power of the Word—Isaiah 55:10-13	Hebrews 4:9-13

The Catechism: Confession and the Office of the Keys

What is Confession?

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.

Kindergarten +

What is the Office of the Keys?

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.

First Grade +

<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. [John 20:22-23]</p>	Second Grade +
<p><i>What do you believe according to these words?</i> 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>	Third Grade +

Prayers: Catechism Prayers, In Our Prayers at Peace, and the Collect for the Week

Prayer for Confidence to Believe in the Promise of the Office of the Keys

O Lord Jesus, You gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to Your disciples and promised that if they forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; and if they do not forgive them, they are not forgiven. Grant us to believe Your promise, so that we receive the ministry of our pastors in repentant faith and with the confidence that they are speaking on Your behalf and for the sake of our souls' salvation. In Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Prayer to Receive the Ministry of Your Pastor

Heavenly Father, I thank You for the gift of the Office of the Holy Ministry. Give faithfulness to my pastor as he calls me to repentance and faith in Your Son. Strengthen me to believe that when my pastor deals with me by Christ's divine command—whether he excludes me from the Lord's Supper for a time in order to call me to repentance, or absolves me when, by the grace of God, I repent of my sins and want to do better—that this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ, my dear Lord, dealt with me Himself; through the same Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen.

In Our Prayers this Week (include the petitions below followed by the Lord's Prayer)

Baptismal Anniversaries: Bill Spilger (2/7), McKenna DePue, Lacy Brandau (2/8) Laura Prah (2/9), Abigail DePue (2/11).

Wedding Anniversaries: Lance and Ann Carus (2/5).

Those Who Serve in the Military: Jessica Franklin (Air Force); John Franklin (Minnesota National Guard); Evon Ingraham (Army Reserves); Robert Haga and Mark Meyle (Marines); Morgan Thoni (Navy); David Uttenreither (Army).

The Sick: Cindy Hirtz, Mark Schneider, and Mark Gretzinger recovering from surgery; Mike Ferguson, Peyton Locklair, Jamilyn Martin, Kathy Miller, Heather Peters, and Josiah Boehringer in cancer treatment.

Those Who Mourn: John Waldron, husband of Elizabeth Waldron (sewing circle).

Collect for the week of Septuagesima Sunday:

O Lord, graciously hear the prayers of Your people that we who justly suffer the consequence of our sin may be mercifully delivered by Your goodness to the glory of Your name; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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

Hymn of the Week

"Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor"

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Looking forward to Sexagesima Sunday

February 12, 2023

Hymns: 942, 947, 577, 954, 960, 962, 580, 585, 895, 617

Isaiah 55:10-13: *The prophet Isaiah catechizes us on the power and efficacy of God's Word. God's Word gives life. It creates faith. It bestows the blessings of God in Christ, according to His good and gracious will. Everything depends upon God's Word. God's Word shall not return to Him void. It will accomplish the things for which He sends it. The Word of God is the power of God to salvation. It puts us to death in the preaching of repentance and it raises us to new life in the preaching of forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the power and all-sufficiency of God's Word.*

Hebrews 4:9-13: *In the midst of the battles and struggles that the Church militant endures against her faith, the apostles' words are most comforting: "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God." We are "diligent to enter that rest" by faithfully hearing the Word of God which is "living and powerful." God's Word kills and it makes alive that we might find our lives and eternal rest only in Him who bore the brunt of the battle for us.*

Luke 8:4-15: *The seed that is planted in the ground appears so lifeless and insignificant, yet from the seed there springs forth new life. The Word of God is life-giving seed. It is planted into the soil of the human heart. It is the source of the new life of faith in Christ. Apart from the Word there is no faith, life, or salvation. Observe the way in which God sows the seed of the Word which is so different from the common human sower. He sows the Seed of the Word everywhere! It falls on the wayside, among the rocks, and among the thorns and thistles. This is not the way of the so-called "skilled sower." To sow seed in this way would be such a waste by the world's standards. But that is the way God operates. He preaches His Word, even where it might appear to be wasteful and useless, so great is His desire to shed the love of Christ abroad in the hearts of sinners. This parable teaches us that the miracle of faith is dependent upon the Word of God. It teaches us that the enemies of faith are Satan, persecution, and the riches of this world. With man it is impossible to overcome these threats to faith, but not with God; with God all things are possible, even deliverance from these enemies.*