

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
For the Week of the Third Sunday in Lent/Oculi Sunday
March 12 through March 19, 2023

Catechesis Notes for the Week — The Giving of the Law and the Ministry of Moses—This week's Bible Stories conclude the Old Testament narrative for the current academic year, from Creation to the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. In these narratives we learn something about the ministry that God had assigned to Moses. On the one hand, he is referred to as a prophet of the Law; on the other hand, Moses also appears as a redeemer figure through whom God brought about Israel's redemption from slavery in Egypt. Yet there was need for a Prophet greater than Moses, namely, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Christ fulfills every commandment of the Lord and every promise of salvation. By His Word of grace and forgiveness we have life and salvation. In the **Advice of Jethro, the Father-in-law of Moses** we see the New Testament ministry anticipated. Moses could not handle all the work there was to do in the ministry for Israel. In the same way, Jesus not only called and ordained Apostles, but the Church has continued to ordain ministers today according to the Lord's mandate. As **Israel Encamps at Mount Sinai** we learn that they are sanctified by the Word of God, even as we are. They were called to be a holy nation and a royal priesthood for the benefit of other nations. The Church is called to carry on this sacred calling today. At Mount Sinai, they saw the glory of God's Law in the thunder and lightning. There would be no approach to God apart from the access to God that Jesus would bring to His people by His atoning sacrifice upon the cross. Finally, the climax of the exodus occurs in the giving of the **Ten Commandments**. The Ten Commandments record God's moral law, what is good and right, what is evil and wrong. The Law is written upon the hearts of all men, but in the Ten Commandments we learn to know what this Law is in all its certainty against the attempts of the flesh to deny what is good and true. The Ten Commandments, God's Law, shows us our sin and how much we need Christ, the only One who could fulfill the Law for us. In the **Lord's Covenant with Israel**, the Lord pledges to be faithful to the promises He has made to His people, and the children of Israel promise the Lord, "All the words which the LORD has said we will do." Israel broke its pledge. The Old Covenant was broken by their unfaithfulness, but in the New Covenant in Jesus' blood the Old Covenant is fulfilled for all.

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: Blessed Are Those Who Hear the Word of God and Keep It!

Invocation

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

Apostles' Creed

Verse: Psalm 26:8

LORD, I have loved the habitation of Your house,
and the place where Your glory dwells.

Psalm 4 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm. O Lord Jesus, the godly trust in Your righteousness rather than a righteousness of their own. You are the glory of Your people and the light of Your countenance covers all our sin with Your righteousness. Give us a calm and quiet faith to entrust ourselves to You when we are frustrated by those who attack our faith. Teach us to commend ourselves to You in prayer, and to lie down and sleep in the confident peace of Your forgiveness; in Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	73	75, 76	78	80	82, 84	85	88	84
Evening	74	77	79	81	83	86	87	42, 32

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Lent 3: A House Divided Cannot Stand—Luke 11:14-28	
Monday	Advice of Jethro, the Father-in-law of Moses—Exodus 18:1-27	John 12:20-26
Tuesday	Israel Encamps at Mount Sinai—Exodus 19:1-25	John 12:27-36
Wednesday	Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane —Matthew 26:36-56	Psalm 35:1-12
Thursday	The Ten Commandments—Exodus 20:1-24 (25-26)	John 12:37-41
Friday	The Lord's Covenant with Israel—Exodus 23:20—24:18	John 12:42-50
Saturday	Lent 4: Manna and Quail in the Wilderness—Exodus 16:2-21	Galatians 4:21-31

The Catechism: What the Hearers Owe Their Pastors (first half)

(Preschool and kindergarten children review the primary texts of the first three commandments)

What does God's Word say the hearers of God's Word owe their pastors?

The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

First Grade +
1 Corinthians 9:14

<p>Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.</p>	<p>Second Grade + Galatians 6:6-7</p>
<p>The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, “Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.”</p>	<p>Third Grade + 1 Timothy 5:17-18</p>

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

Prayer for Hearers of God's Word:

O Lord Jesus, we give thanks to You for the gift of pastors who preach Your saving Gospel and administer Your life-giving sacraments to us. Crucify our flesh and destroy all impenitence and unbelief in us, so that we who have received faithful instruction in the Word of God might provide generously for the support of our pastors. Teach us to believe that our pastors, who faithfully sow the seed and tread out the grain of Your Word, are worthy of their wages and are entitled to reap from what they have sown. Teach us to believe that preaching and teaching Your Word is the most important work that our pastors do, so that we might honor and support them in this work, live together with them in the peace of Your forgiveness, and hold them in the highest regard in love for the sake of the Gospel; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Collect for the week of The Third Sunday in Lent / Oculi Sunday:

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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

Birth: thanksgiving for the birth of Caleb John, infant son of Erik and Jennifer Krueger.

Baptismal Anniversaries: Steve LaSage, Dave Nitzsche, Sarah Prom, Jeanine Walentoski (3/18).

Wedding Anniversaries: John and Samantha Bender (3/14).

The Sick: Mark Gretzinger medical testing for undiagnosed medical issues; Larry Haga and Dawn Fredrich recovering from surgery; Dennis Michaelis (cousin of Verla Gatchell); Gabby Hartwig; Mike Ferguson, Peyton Locklair, Jamilyn Martin, Kathy Miller, and Heather Peters in cancer treatment.

Hospice Care: Jim Weber

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

Hymn of the Week

“May God Bestow on Us His Grace” (stanza 1)

823

Looking forward to Laetare Sunday—The Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 19, 2023

Hymns: 708, 571, 572, 560, 531, 692

Exodus 16:2-21: Among the amazing things about the complaining of the children of Israel in the wilderness is that they had witnessed so many of the Lord's mighty miracles of deliverance. Why would they still doubt Him? Faith only comes by the Word of God. No amount of miracles can convince the stubborn heart of sin. He fed them in the wilderness as a sign of His grace and mercy. The greatest miracle is the grace of God that such faithfulness proclaimed. His mercy in the Gospel is not only the greatest miracle, but the only thing that can move the stubborn heart to believe.

Galatians 4:21-31: The child born to Hagar was a symbol of trying to save oneself by one's own work. Abraham and Sarah tried to “help God” keep His promise by having the servant Hagar have a child by Abraham. Ishmael was NOT the son of the promise. The son of the promise would be born not by the works of the law or any human effort, but by the free grace and promise that God made to Abraham and Sarah. We are not children of God by the Law, but children of God by the promise of the Gospel.

John 6:1-15: Jesus fed the 5,000 at the time of the Passover. Great multitudes came to Him with all their diseases and maladies. They came to hear His preaching and to receive the hope of salvation. All of Jesus' miracles were wonderful signs of the salvation He came to bring. By feeding the 5,000 at the time of Passover, He showed them that HE was the fulfillment of the Passover. He would fulfill the Law. He would give them freedom from the slavery to sin, death, and the power of Satan. He is the source of life—the very Bread of Life Himself. Despite this, they misinterpreted His miracle. Instead of seeing Him as the Savior from all their sins and the devastating effects that sin brought upon this world, they saw Him as a “bread king” who could meet their every self-centered demand. He was “the Prophet greater than Moses,” but they treated Him the same way that Moses was treated. They would grumble and complain if they didn't get their way. In faithfulness to the promises of the Gospel, Jesus continued to do what the Father had called Him to do. He would go to the cross for a sinful and rebellious people. It is only after His resurrection that those who confessed Him to be the Messiah would understand more clearly the nature of His work. In the miracle of the Feeding of the 5,000 we see a foreshadowing of the Lord's Supper. In this sign He calls us to believe in Him and to worship Him in humble and contrite faith.