

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

For the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

July 9 through July 16, 2023

Catechesis Notes for the Week — The Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven — What are parables? Are they stories or illustrations that make the complex easier to understand? Not necessarily. Even Jesus’ disciples had difficulty understanding the parables. “Why do You speak to them in parables?” they asked Jesus. To this Jesus replied, “because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.” The parables of Jesus so often describe the grace of God in the Gospel of Christ which is otherwise hidden from those who do not believe. Even Christians can have a difficult time understanding the parables. Parables are intended to help us ponder the mysteries of God’s grace in Christ which is very different from the world’s way of thinking. This helps to explain why parables often take strange twists and turns that are unexpected, like a sower who sows seed all over the place and not just on the good soil. The **Parable of the Tares and the Wheat** teaches us that believers and unbelievers will coexist in the world until the Judgment, and that the identity of the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the wicked one is often hidden and will not be revealed until the end of the age. In the **Parables of the Kingdom**, the mustard seed is Christ planted in this world by the Gospel—it is a Word that looks to be the most insignificant word in all the earth, yet He produces a mighty congregation of believers. The Gospel of Christ is like leaven that spreads faith in Christ often imperceptibly. Redemption in Christ is taught by the man who buys the entire field in order to obtain the treasure, or the merchant that pays the ultimate price to obtain the pearl. Our value is in the price that Christ paid for our redemption. The **Parable of the Dragnet** teaches us that on the Last Day the angels of God will gather together all people, separating unbelievers from believers, and casting unbelievers into hell. This week concludes with events in Jesus’ ministry that both follow and illustrate the kingdom parables. In **John the Baptist Is Beheaded** we see the depths of human depravity among those who reject the call to repentance and violently oppose the Gospel. In the **Feeding of the 5,000** Jesus shows Himself to be the bread of life and the One who will provide His ministers with all that they need to feed the sheep with manna from heaven.

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: I Will Make You Fishers of Men

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: 1 Corinthians 1:18

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Psalms 27 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: O Lord Jesus, You are my light and my salvation, and You are the strength of my life. Therefore, grant me to fear no one. Give me a hunger and thirst for Your Word, that I may delight to dwell in Your house all the days of my life and to behold the beauty of Your love for me and for all sinners. Teach me Your way, O Lord, that I may wait upon You and be of good courage; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	122, 123	125, 126	128, 129	131, 132	135	137, 138	140, 141	144
Evening	124	127	130	133, 134	136	139	142, 143	145

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Trinity 5: “I will make you fishers of men...”—Luke 5:1-11	
Monday	The Purpose of Parables—Matthew 13:10-23	Isaiah 33:17-24
Tuesday	The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares—Matthew 13:24-35	Isaiah 34:1-4, 8
Wednesday	Parables of the Kingdom—Matthew 13:36-46	Isaiah 35:1-10
Thursday	The Parable of the Dragnet—Matthew 13:47-58	Isaiah 36:1-2, 13-22
Friday	John the Baptist Is Beheaded—Matthew 14:1-13	Isaiah 37:1-20
Saturday	The Feeding of the 5,000—Matthew 14:14-21	Isaiah 37:21-37

The Catechism: The Office of the Keys

<p>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.</p>	First Grade +
<p>Where is this written? 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>What do you believe according to these words? 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 Prayer, the Collect for the Week, and In Our Prayers at Peace

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.

Collect for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

O God, You have prepared for those who love You good things that surpass all understanding. Pour into our hearts such love toward You that we, loving You above all things, may obtain Your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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

Baptismal Anniversaries: Mitchell Dubnicka, Gus Kütemeier (7/9), Harold Kampin, Grace Kirk, Timothy Fischer (7/11), Laura Ferguson, Kara Rhode (7/13), Meghan Krueger (7/14).

Wedding Anniversaries: Jon and Martha Bruss (7/10), Larry and Toni Garms (7/15).

Wedding: Anders Rhode and Hannah Ligrow united in marriage on July 8.

The Sick: Donna Aufdemberge dealing with health issues; Chuck Finke, Wally Schneider, David Berger recovering from surgery; Andy Helwig recovering after liver transplant; Walt Dissen in rehab.

Those in Cancer Treatment: Cheryl Wallace (daughter of Larry and Sharon Martin) undergoing tests for malignant melanoma; Rev. Dr. John Wille, Kathleen Hetzel, Tanya Knoblock, Dennis Michaelis, Gabby Hartwig, Peyton Locklair, Kathy Miller, Donna Lovas’s niece Beth, and Heather Peters.

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

Hymn of the Week

“Come, Follow Me,’ the Savior Spake”

Looking forward to the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

July 16, 2023

Hymns: 596, 562, 594, 619, 563, 603

Exodus 20:1-17: The Law is given to preach repentance in order that Christ might be received. Christ alone has fulfilled the whole will and Law of God. We need the Law because we are sinners who need to be directed back to Him again and again. This is the most important function of the Law, for without this function there could be no repentance and the Gospel could not create faith. But the Law also functions in society and at home to maintain order and to curb the gross outbreaks of evil. The Law also functions to guide the Christian in knowing what is true, good, right, and wrong. By virtue of our faith in Christ, the new man in us desires to please God and do what is right according to the Law.

Romans 6:1-11: In our Baptism we are buried with Christ into His death and raised with Christ into His resurrection. This means that all that He is and has done becomes our own and all that we are has become His. This is the basis of our salvation and our standing before God. We are covered with the righteousness of Christ that sets us free and enables us to live in the freedom of the forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 5:17-26: “Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.” Who then can be saved? The only righteousness that “exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees” is the righteousness of Christ. He alone fulfilled every “jot and tittle” of the Law by His sinless life and by offering up His life to satisfy the Law’s just demand for atonement. We must have the righteousness of Christ as our very own in order to be saved. His righteousness alone covers all sin and makes us acceptable to God. His righteousness is received by faith as it is proclaimed to us in the Gospel and sacraments.