

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
For the Seventh Sunday after Trinity
July 23 through July 30, 2023

Catechesis Notes for the Week — “Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me” – When Jesus speaks these words to the disciples, He calls them and us to live the baptismal life. The cross always means death. When we become a Christian, we die to our sinful self in the call to “contrition and repentance that the new man might come forth and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.” Our lives, as baptized Christians, are patterned after Christ’s life of death and resurrection. In the **Transfiguration** we not only see the deity of Christ shining through His humanity, but we also see the glory that waits us all in the resurrection. **St. James the Elder, Apostle** is celebrated this Tuesday. He is the first of the Twelve to be martyred for His faith. The reading from Acts 11 highlights his martyrdom, but also God’s providence that spared Peter until another day. The call to follow Jesus resulted in James’ literal martyrdom, but by it he gave witness to the suffering and death of Jesus for our salvation. When a **Boy Is Healed** after the Transfiguration, we see the violence that is often associated with the miracle of faith. The old nature must die; the new nature must rise. But in the end, there is peace. **Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection** more frequently as He draws near to Jerusalem to suffer. The disciples would later remember these words which would be a source of strength as well as a catechesis on what is at the center of all Apostolic doctrine. Finally, we see in the question **In Who Is the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven**, Jesus sets forth a dependent child as the picture of what it is to be a Christian. His most severe condemnation is for anyone who would cause one of His little ones who believe in Him to stumble. It would be better if they had never been born. God’s love and desire to save is the motivation for going to an impenitent brother in **If Your Brother Sins**. Ultimately such encounters are to serve the sole purpose of bringing about repentance and restoring those who have gone astray from the faith.

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 Causes His Grace to Shine Forth for All People.

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Romans 6:22-23

But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Psalms 33:1-11 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: O Lord, by Your Word the heavens were made and all the host of them by the breath of Your mouth. Grant that we who have been given all things by Your almighty Word may rightly praise You for Your steadfast love and mercy, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in godly fear throughout our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	14, 15	18	19, 20	22	26, 27	30	32	33
Evening	13	16, 17	21	23, 24	25	28, 29	31	34

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Trinity 7: Feeding of the 4,000—Mark 8:1-9	
Monday	Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me—Matthew 16:24-28	Isaiah 44:2-8
Tuesday	The Transfiguration—Matthew 17:1-13 St. James the Elder, Apostle: Acts 11:27—12:5	Isaiah 44:9-23
Wednesday	A Boy Is Healed—Matthew 17:14-21	Isaiah 44:24-28
Thursday	Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection—Matthew 17:22-27	Isaiah 45:1-13
Friday	Who Is the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven—Matthew 18:1-14	Isaiah 45:14-25
Saturday	If Your Brother Sins—Matthew 18:15-22	Isaiah 46:1-13

The Catechism: The Second Article of the Creed

What is the Second Article of the Creed?

And [I believe] in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord...

Preschool +

<p><i>What does this mean?</i> I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death,</p>	First Grade +
<p>That I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, Just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.</p>	Second Grade +

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

Collect for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

O God, whose never-failing providence orders all things both in heaven and earth, we humbly implore You to put away from us all hurtful things and to give us those things that are profitable for us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Collect for St. James the Elder, Apostle

O gracious God, Your servant and apostle James was the first among the Twelve to suffer martyrdom for the name of Jesus Christ. Pour out upon the leaders of Your Church that spirit of self-denying service that they may forsake all false and passing allurements and follow Christ alone, 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)

Baptismal Anniversaries: Barry Wurster, Elias Giordano (7/23), Bryan Stoltenberg, Carson Scalercio, Michael Daleiden (7/25).

Wedding Anniversaries: Kerry and Cindy Welch (7/23), Erik and Jennifer Krueger, Keith and Hannah Gierach (7/25), Andrew and Olivia Gehlbach (7/26), Chuck and Jan Finke (7/27).

Thanksgiving for successful recovery: Walt Dissen, who has left the hospital and is making a new home in Fort Wayne. Wally Schneider who has been blessed with a good recovery from heart surgery.

The Sick: Gabby Hartwig and Cheryl Wallace recovering from cancer surgery, David Berger who continues to receive treatment; Andy Helwig recovering after liver transplant; Drew Franklin recovering from Lyme disease following hospitalization.

Those in Cancer Treatment: Rev. Dr. John Wille, Kathleen Hetzel, Tanya Knoblock, Dennis Michaelis, Peyton Locklair, Kathy Miller, and Donna Lovas's niece Beth.

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

Hymn of the Week

“Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good”

819

Looking forward to the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

July 30, 2023

Hymns: 614, 745, 586, 851, 578, 643

Jeremiah 23:16-29: Jeremiah's warning about “false shepherds” is a warning directed against the believer's unbelieving nature. Our old Adam does not want to hear the call to repentance. He wants to hear the message that “all is well” and that God is pleased with him. The proper preaching of the Word of God always involves the crucifying of our flesh. Only then will we be able to receive the truly sweet and life-giving Words of the Gospel.

Acts 20:27-38: The Apostle Paul meets with the pastors of the congregations of Ephesus for what he believes might be the last time he sees them upon this earth. He had been the missionary and evangelist who had brought the Gospel to them. He had been their chief teacher of the faith and had sent others to them to help in the training of pastors so that their congregations would be well cared for. Now Paul bids them farewell. He speaks to them about the nature of the Church in this world. It will always be the church militant, struggling with sin, misbelief, and false doctrine from within and without. Enemies of the faith will attack them. In Paul's final word to the Ephesian pastors, he directs them to the only thing that will give them safety: “The Word of God's grace.” What is the “Word of Grace”? It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul is encouraging them, never to grow tired of preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The preaching of repentance and the forgiveness of sins is that which occurs again and again and again. Everyone needs this preaching of the “Word of grace” because it turns us away from self-reliance to reliance upon Christ Jesus and His death for our sins. The only safety for the church in the midst of attacks upon her faith is in this Gospel.

Matthew 7:15-23: Prophets are those who “speak forth the Word of God.” Therefore, a false prophet is one who claims to be speaking God's Word but is actually speaking false doctrine. Jesus says that we will recognize false prophets by their fruits. What are the fruits of false prophets? False doctrine is the chief fruit of false prophets. False doctrine leads people away from sole reliance upon Christ to reliance upon themselves. Learning the truths of the Small Catechism is one of the chief ways by which the sheep learn to recognize a false prophet. Hearing and learning the basic truths of the Catechism guards us against the seductive lies of those who would divert our faith from the only Savior from sin, our Lord Jesus Christ.