

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
For the Eighth Sunday after Trinity
July 30 through August 6, 2023

Catechesis Notes for the Week — The Strength and Comfort of the Grace of God — “How often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” This is the question that Peter asks Jesus which inspires **the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant**. The liberality with which Jesus forgave sin and received sinners demonstrated the kind of grace that Peter had never seen in any other teacher. Jesus’ answer drives the disciples to understand that the grace of God in Christ is even greater than we can imagine. In the parable, the kingdom of God’s grace is represented by forgiveness for a debt that is impossible for the servant to ever repay. Our sin is an impossible debt before God. But in Christ it has been forgiven! If, therefore, we refuse forgiveness to a brother (who owes us far less than we have been forgiven by God) we deny the grace of God and reject the forgiveness that we ourselves have received from Christ. God’s grace in Christ is our only strength and comfort. When **Jesus Teaches on Marriage and Divorce**, we are to understand that it is the strength and comfort of God’s forgiving grace in Christ that alone makes it possible for us to be faithful in marriage. It is God’s grace that is on display when **Jesus Blesses the Children**. They could do nothing to receive His blessing but were given the blessing of forgiveness and life with Jesus as a pure gift. The kingdom of God must be received as a gift by all of us, or it cannot be received at all. The “gift character” of the Christian faith is something that the **Rich Young Ruler** could not grasp because he trusted in his own works for salvation. The one thing he lacked was repentant faith in Christ that trusted in Him alone for salvation. The **Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard** is a parable of pure grace as illustrated in the various “workers in the vineyard” who are all “paid” exactly the same wage. Since Christ has paid the debt of salvation for each of us, it can only be received as a gift. In **Jesus Predicts His Passion a Third Time**, we learn that it is the atonement for sin by Christ upon the cross that is the foundation for the grace of God. Christ died in sacrificial love for us. His atonement won forgiveness for all our sin, and it is this forgiving grace of God in Christ that is at the center of all Christian theology and our only strength and comfort in life and in death.

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: Beware of False Prophets

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Matthew 7:15-16a

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing,
but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.

Psalms 26 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: Lord Jesus, abide with us in these latter days of evil, false doctrine, and unbelief. Grant to Your Church true shepherds and faithful pastors who preach Your Word in its purity, and who lead us in the way of truth. Preserve our souls from being deluded by false wisdom and the teachings of the world that are contrary to Your truth. Keep us steadfast in Your Word and faith all the days of our lives; in Your holy name we pray. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	33	35	37	40	42, 43	45	48, 49	51
Evening	34	36	38	39, 41	44	46, 47	50	52, 53

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Trinity 8: “Beware of False Prophets”—Matthew 7:15-23	
Monday	The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant—Matthew 18:21-35	Isaiah 47:5-11
Tuesday	Jesus Teaches on Marriage and Divorce—Matthew 19:1-12	Isaiah 48:9-19
Wednesday	Jesus Blesses the Children—Matthew 19:13-15	Isaiah 49:1-7
Thursday	The Rich Young Ruler—Matthew 19:16-30	Isaiah 49:8-17
Friday	The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard—Matthew 20:1-16	Isaiah 50:1-11
Saturday	Jesus Predicts His Passion a Third Time—Matthew 20:17-28	Isaiah 51:1-11

The Catechism: The Lord’s Prayer—The First Petition

<p>What is the First Petition? Hallowed be Thy name.</p>	Preschool +
<p>What does this mean? God’s name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray in this petition that it may be kept holy among us also.</p>	Second Grade +
<p>How is God’s name kept holy? God’s name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God’s Word profanes the name of God among us. Protect us from this, heavenly Father!</p>	Third Grade +

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

Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Grant to us, Lord, the Spirit to think and do always such things as are right, that we, who cannot do anything that is good without You, may be enabled by You to live according to Your will; 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)

Baptismal Anniversaries: Wyatt Thoni (8/2), Julie Goltermann, Polly Joubert (8/3), Keith Kunkel (8/4), Ted Dhein (8/5).
Wedding Anniversaries: Keith and Cindy Kunkel, Jim and Dorothee Behling (7/30), Jeremy and Nancy LaFore (7/31), Scott and Chantel Perry (8/1), Tom and Donna Aufdemberge (8/4).
The Sick: Walt Dissen, who has been rehospitalized with sepsis and is in serious condition; 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

“In God, My Faithful God”

745

Looking forward to the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

August 6, 2023

Hymns: 743, 730, 781, 714, 544, 761

2 Samuel 22:26-34: This passage of Second Samuel records for us part of the text that Jesus used in teaching the parable of the Unjust Steward. It speaks of how the Lord Himself is more shrewd and clever than even the most shrewd and clever of men: “With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; with a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless; with the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd. You will save the humble people; but Your eyes are on the haughty, that You may bring them down” (vs. 26-28).

1 Corinthians 10:6-13: St. Paul uses the example of Old Testament Israel to warn the Corinthian Christians against the danger of idolatry (false faith and worship) which evidences itself in sexual immorality, murmuring, and complaining against the Lord. The end of such idolatry is the loss of faith and eternal death. This warning against the danger of idolatry is intended to draw us to the One Man, Christ Jesus, who alone can deliver us from these dangers in the time of such temptation: “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (vs. 12-13).

Luke 16:1-13: “The master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly” (Luke 16:1–9). The steward’s shrewdness is praiseworthy for two reasons. First, he knew the master would be merciful. He trusted that the master would honor the debts he forgave in the master’s name. In the same way, though we have squandered our heavenly Father’s possessions in selfishness and sin, Jesus is the Steward who has canceled our debt, knowing that His forgiveness will be honored by the Father because of the holy cross. Secondly, the steward was shrewd in using oil and wheat to provide for his earthly welfare. So also do these earthly elements aid us when pressed into heavenly use in the anointing of baptism and the wheat of the Lord’s Supper. Those who have the Sacraments will have an eternal home when the earthly fails. These are our escape in temptation (1 Cor. 10:6–13). For the Lord is our strength and a shield to all who trust in Him (2 Sam 22:26–34). —Excerpted from the LSB hymnal project