

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
For the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity
August 20 through August 27, 2023

Catechesis Notes for the Week — Prepared for Christ’s Coming — We conclude our summertime readings from Matthew this week by looking forward to Christ’s Second Coming. The **Parable of the Fig Tree** teaches us that the signs of the times (false Christ’s, false prophets, earthquakes, famine, pestilence, wars, persecution, etc.) teach us that the new and better life in Christ is about to dawn, like the budding leaves of the fig tree that teach us that summer is near. “Heaven and earth will pass away” but Jesus’ Word will never pass away. Who is the **Faithful Servant** but that minister or Christian that is living faithfully according to Christ’s Word. Ministers faithfully preach, teach, and administer the Sacraments. Christians live in the station in life, confessing Jesus with faith in Him and love to the neighbor. The **Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins** teaches us that we are prepared for Christ’s return in glory as our heavenly bridegroom if our hearts are filled with the Holy Spirit and faith in Christ. This preparedness only comes through the ongoing reception of Christ’s Word and Sacrament. The **Parable of the Talents** teaches us that the Lord has committed His Gospel and sacraments to His servants, that they might preach and administer them faithfully in His stead until His return. All ministers will be called to account on the Last Day for the administration of His gifts. In the **Second Coming in Judgment**, Jesus will separate believers and unbelievers. The works of mercy and compassion that are cited in the sheep are the works of love that flow from faith in Christ and which identify Christians as followers of Jesus. The fact that the sheep are amazed that Jesus cited such things, shows that their faith is not in such works, but that such works are the sign of living faith in Christ. When Jesus’ returns again in glory, we will hear His sweet word of comfort, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

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 Be Merciful to Me, a Sinner!

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Psalms 68:1-10 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: Merciful God, we humbly implore You to cast the bright beams of Your light upon Your Church that we, being instructed by the doctrine of the blessed apostles, may walk in the light of Your truth and finally attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	88	89	91	92	95, 96	98, 100	101	103
Evening	87	90	93	94	97	99	102	104

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Trinity 11: The Pharisee and the Tax Collector—Luke 18:9-14	
Monday	The Parable of the Fig Tree—Matthew 24:32-42	Isaiah 61:1-11
Tuesday	The Faithful Servant—Matthew 24:43-51	Isaiah 62:1-12
Wednesday	The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins—Matthew 25:1-13	Isaiah 63:7-16
Thursday	The Parable of the Talents—Matthew 25:14-30	Isaiah 64:1-12
	St. Bartholomew, Apostle: John 1:43-51	Isaiah 65:17-25
Friday	The Second Coming in Judgment—Matthew 25:31-46	Isaiah 66:1-2, 18-24
Saturday	Trinity 12: Isaiah 29:17-24	2 Corinthians 3:4-11

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 +

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

Prayer before Confession

Merciful Father, You promise us that if we confess our sins, You are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. As I come before You for confession and absolution, teach me to consider my place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Work in me true contrition and repentance. Give me a desire to live a new life. Help me to know and confess my sin truthfully. As I receive my Savior's forgiveness, comfort my conscience, renew my life, strengthen my faith in Him, and restore to me the joy of Your salvation. All this I ask for the sake of my dear Lord Jesus Christ, who died for me and shed His blood for me upon the cross for the forgiveness of all my sins. Amen.

Collect for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God, always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than we either desire or deserve, pour down upon us the abundance of Your mercy, forgiving those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things that we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

St. Bartholomew, Apostle (8/24)

Almighty God, Your Son, Jesus, chose Bartholomew to be an apostle to preach the blessed Gospel. Grant that Your Church may love what he believed and preach what he taught; through Jesus Christ, 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: Beth Bender, Mark Ruhbusch (8/20), Ashley Sawatzki, Wesley Giordano, Rebecca Gierach (8/21), Lance Carus, Jack Christopherson, Esther Prowatzke (8/25), Sarah Bender (8/26).

Wedding Anniversaries: Barry and Maureen Wurster (8/20), Mark and Pam Thoni (8/23), Tom and Nancy Landry (8/24).

The Sick: Amy Bruss (daughter-in-law of Jon & Marty Bruss) as she continues to struggle with stroke related limited mobility; Konner and Travis, friends of Sarah May, recovering from injuries sustained in a serious motorcycle accident; Cindy Ruhmau recuperating from right hip replacement; Piera Siegmann and Rev. Austin Meier burdened by mental health affliction; Gabby Hartwig recovering from cancer surgery, David Berger who continues in treatment; Andy Helwig recovering after liver transplant; Drew Franklin recovering from Lyme disease.

Those in Cancer Treatment: Michael (friend of Anna & David Steinhilb) diagnosed with lung cancer; Rev. Dr. John Wille, Kathleen Hetzel, 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

"Baptismal Waters Cover Me"

616

Looking forward to the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

August 27, 2023

Hymns: 530, 545, 704, 841, 398, 933

Isaiah 29:17-24: How can deaf hear? How can unbelievers believe? They cannot hear and they cannot believe unless the Lord opens their ears and hearts to faith by the miracle of His Word. This Old Testament reading corresponds to the Gospel for the day when Jesus heals the deaf mute. Isaiah foretells the ministry of the Gospel, "In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. The humble also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel."

2 Corinthians 3:4-11: The mark of all true theology and of the Christian faith that believes the Word of God is that all glory is given to Christ alone. The ministry of the Law kills all self-righteousness and pride. The ministry of the Gospel gives life which can only be received as a gift by unworthy sinners. Even the minister preaches and teaches this Word, not in any strength or worthiness of His own, but by the grace of God. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God." The ministry of the Spirit is the ministry of the Gospel of God's free grace. It is a glorious ministry because it takes away all sin and fully reconciles us to God in Christ.

Mark 7:31-37: What a beautiful picture of how we all became Christians, followers of Jesus! The deaf mute could not hear, and he could not speak. He had no ability of his own to receive the Word of God that was necessary for him to come to faith. And because he had no faith, he could not speak or confess his faith. Jesus took the man aside from the multitude, put His fingers in his ears, spat and touched his tongue, sighed in the Spirit as He looked up to His Father in heaven, and said to the man, "Ephphatha!" "Be opened!" By Jesus' Word he who could not hear and received the Word his ears and heart were opened to faith, and out of the faith of His heart his tongue that was in bondage was loosed and he spoke, confessing his faith and praising His Jesus. Word and water came together in this miracle in the touch of Jesus voice and the spittle from His mouth. How very like Baptism this is. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Out of the heart of faith the tongue is loosed, and we speak, confessing our faith and praising our God. This intimate miracle of healing illustrates our utter helplessness and our total dependence upon Christ for the miracle of faith and the gift of confessing our Savior.