

# The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer  
For the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity  
September 17 through September 24, 2023*

**Catechesis Notes for the Week — Atonement to Cover Sin — The Day of Atonement** was among the most important days in the Old Testament Church Year. Atonement is payment for sin. On the Day of Atonement, the sins of the congregation were imputed to the “scapegoat” which was then driven out into the wilderness. John the Baptist connected this to Jesus who, at His Baptism, was designated the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Following this the High Priest took the blood of atonement and went into the Holy of Holies to offer the blood upon the mercy seat in payment for the sins of the people. He then went out to the congregation and sprinkled them with the blood and water of atonement for the forgiveness of their sins. This action found its fulfillment in Jesus’ atoning sacrifice upon the cross. Blood and water flowed forth from His side after He was offered up in death upon the altar of the cross. In Holy Baptism, the water and blood of Jesus covers our sin and declares us righteous. The remaining Old Testament stories for this week highlight the ministry of the Levitical priesthood which find its fulfillment in Jesus’ priesthood. By **the Second Passover** after Israel had left Egypt, the Old Testament worship life was established. It taught them the pervasiveness of sin, the need for the sacrifice of blood to pay for that sin, the need for a substitute to be offered up in their place, and the need for a priest who would intercede for them in the sacrifices, prayers, and teaching that they needed. Jesus is all of this for us. He is both the High Priest and the sacrifice that makes atonement for sin. He continually intercedes for us in prayer on the basis of His sacrifice. He is also our teacher who, by the preaching of His Word, instructs us throughout our earthly pilgrimage that we might faithfully live the joyful life of daily contrition and repentance.

## 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: Seek First the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness!

### Invocation

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

### Apostles’ Creed

#### Verse: Romans 13:10

Love does no harm to a neighbor;  
therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

#### Psalm 86 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

**Prayer on the Psalm:** Most merciful God and Father, I am poor and needy, but You are the God of compassion and mercy, ready to forgive and answer the prayers of all who call upon You through faith in Your Son. Teach me Your way, O Lord, that I may walk in Your truth. Strengthen Your servant, that I may bear the cross with patience and hope; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	1, 2	5	8, 9	10	14, 15	18	19, 20	22
Evening	3	4, 6	7	11, 12	13	16, 17	21	23, 24

### Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	<b>Seek First the Kingdom of God—Matthew 6:24-34</b>	
Monday	The Day of Atonement—Leviticus 16:1-17 (18-19) 20-22, 34	Hebrews 8:1-13
Tuesday	The Lord Commands a Census of Israel—Numbers 1:1-4, 17-19, 45-54	Hebrews 9:1-10
Wednesday	The Levites Are Called to Serve as Priests—Numbers 3:1-16, 39-51	Hebrews 9:11-22
Thursday	The Priestly Blessing—Numbers 6:22-27 <b>St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist—Matthew 9:9-13</b>	Hebrews 9:23-28
Friday	The Second Passover—Numbers 9:1-14	Hebrews 10:1-10
Saturday	The Lord Raises the Widow’s Son—1 Kings 17:17-24	Ephesians 3:13-21

### The Catechism: The Ten Commandments— The Seventh and Eighth Commandments

What is the Seventh Commandment? <b>You shall not steal.</b>	Preschool +
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.	First Grade +

<i>What is the Eighth Commandment?</i> <b>You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.</b>	Preschool +
<i>What does this mean?</i> We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.	Second Grade +

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

**Prayers on the Seventh Commandment:**

*Heavenly Father, forgive us our sins of stealing and strengthen our faith in Jesus so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

**Prayers on the Eighth Commandment:**

*Most merciful God and Father, in the Eighth Commandment You teach us that a person's good name and reputation are gifts of your grace and that you desire them to be defended and protected by what we say. For Jesus' sake, forgive us for every form of lying, gossip, and slander which hurts our neighbor in the eyes of others. Forgive us for all the ways in which we pass judgment against our neighbor when we have not been given the authority to do so. Forgive us for failing to defend our neighbor when his good name and reputation are being attacked by others. By Your words of grace and mercy to us in Jesus, teach us to tell the truth in love, and strengthen us to cover our neighbor's sins with words of forgiveness and compassion, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

**Collect for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity**

*O Lord, we implore You, let Your continual pity cleanse and defend Your Church; and because she cannot continue in safety without Your aid, preserve her evermore by Your help and goodness; 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. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist (Sept. 21)**

*O Son of God, our blessed Savior Jesus Christ, You called Matthew the tax collector to be an apostle and evangelist. Through his faithful and inspired witness, grant that we also may follow You, leaving behind all covetous desires and love of riches; for You live and reign with the Father 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:** Jacob Rank (9/17), Stan Heine, Kelsey DePue (9/18), Andrew Gehlbach (9/20), Katie Banasik, Tabitha Daleiden (9/21), Ken Dumke, Randy Kirk, Samantha Bender, Angela Volquardsen, Aubrey Hoffmann (9/22).

**Wedding Anniversaries:** Jason and Cathy Petersen (9/17), William and Grace Palmer (9/20), Ben and Betsy Banasik (9/22).

**The Sick:** Tom Zahn, painful back and spine issues; Amy Bruss struggling with stroke related mobility issues; Konner and Travis, recovering from serious injuries from a motorcycle accident; Kathy May in follow-up treatment from cancer surgery.

**Those in Cancer Treatment:** Michael (friend of Anna & David Steinhilb) diagnosed with lung cancer; Rev. Dr. John Wille, Kathleen Hetzel, Dennis Michaelis, Kathy Miller, and Gabby Hartwig.

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

**Hymn of the Week**

**"Abide, O Dearest Jesus" (stanzas 1-2)**

**919**

**Looking forward to the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity**

**September 24, 2023**

**Hymns: 755, 552, 544, 756, 619, 745**

**I Kings 17:17-24:** *The account of Elijah's ministry to the widow of Zarephath teaches us much about our earthly sojourn as Christians. On the one hand, the Lord is our salvation and His Word comforts and sustains us throughout our earthly pilgrimage. On the other hand, our union with Christ's death and resurrection means that we will die and then be raised to new life in the resurrection. This is our ultimate hope and comfort. The raising of the widow's son in the Old Testament points us to its fulfillment in Jesus' ministry of resurrection. On the last day, we will be restored to eternal communion with Christ and those we love who have died in the faith.*

**Ephesians 3:13-21:** *Christ dwells in our hearts through faith, that we might know and comprehend the riches and depth of His love.*

**Luke 7:11-17:** *Jesus is the resurrection and the life, but the life He gives is not merely the resuscitation of a dead individual, but the restoration of life with God and one another in a wonderful fellowship with the Triune God of love in whose image we were created. Loneliness and separation from loved ones are what sin and its resulting death brings into our lives. When Jesus raised the widow of Nain's son, he arrested the funeral procession, touched the open coffin, and spoke the word that raised the dead. It is a wonderful picture of what Jesus' death, resurrection, and preaching accomplishes. He has touched our sin and death and made it His own. He took away the cause of death when He atoned for the sin which separated us from God and one another. And in His resurrection, He proclaims a Word of forgiveness and new life which raises the dead and restores our fellowship with God and one another. That Jesus presented the raised son to his mother is a wonderful picture of the blessed reunion which is yet to come. From this miracle the people rightly confessed, "A great prophet has risen up among us" and "God has visited His people."*