

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
 For the Week of Quinquagesima Sunday
 February 11, 2024, through February 18, 2024

Catechesis Notes for the Week — *Though your sins are like scarlet...* “Our sin is serious and pervasive. It is a thorough corruption of our nature. The Lord compares our sin to the deep scarlet or crimson color of blood to teach us that life must be offered to make atonement for sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Atonement for sin is made by the shedding of blood because life is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11), but our own life is not sufficient to make the payment. That this payment is made by another (vicarious atonement) is indicated by the phrases, “*Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*” Forgiveness is from the Lord alone. It is God’s transaction. He provides the pure and unblemished Lamb to make the payment which He Himself demands (Genesis 22:8). His forgiveness is full, thorough, and complete, like the pure, brilliant white of snow and like the covering of lamb’s wool. According to the Lord’s reasoning or reckoning, although our sins are great, He imputes them to Jesus who makes atonement for them by the shedding of His blood upon the cross. For Jesus’ sake, He declares us forgiven and we are justified.”
 [Excerpt from Lutheran Catechesis: Catechist Edition, p. 242b]

The Order of Meditation and Prayer

Theme: The Gospel Delivers Us from the Blindness of Unbelief

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Isaiah 1:18

“Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD, “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

Psalm 51 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: Spare us, O Lord, and mercifully forgive us our sins. Though by our continual transgressions we have merited Your chastisements, be gracious to us. Grant that all these punishments which we have deserved may not come upon us, but that all things may work to our everlasting good; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	128, 129	131, 132	135	137, 138	140, 141	144	147	148
Evening	130	133, 134	136	139	142, 143	145	146	149, 150

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Jesus Gives Sight to a Blind Man—Luke 18:31-43	
Monday	The Miraculous Catch of Fish—Luke 5:1-11	Matthew 28:18-20
Tuesday	Jesus Forgives the Paralytic—Matthew 9:1-13	2 Corinthians 4:1-15
Wednesday	Jesus Sends Out the Twelve—Matthew 9:35—10:20, 40	2 Timothy 4:1-5
ASH WED:	Fasting, Almsgiving, and Prayer—Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21	
Thursday	Holy Absolution for the Erring Brother—Matthew 18:14-22	Romans 10:8-17
Friday	No School—Parable of the Unforgiving Servant—Mt. 18:21-35	1 John 1:5-10
Saturday	David and Goliath—1 Samuel 17:40-51	2 Corinthians 6:1-10

The Catechism: Confession and the Office of the Keys

<p><i>What is Confession?</i> 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.</p>	Kindergarten +
<p><i>What is the Office of the Keys?</i> 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><i>Where is this written?</i> 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 +

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.

Third Grade +

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

Collect for the week of Quinquagesima Sunday:

O Lord, mercifully hear our prayers and having set us free from the bonds of our sins deliver us from every evil; 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 Ash Wednesday:

Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God...

Daily Themes for Prayer — “Let us pray...”

Sunday: *For the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.*

Monday: *For faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one’s calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.*

Tuesday: *For deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.*

Wednesday: *For marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.*

Thursday: *For the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deacons, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed sacrament of Christ’s body and blood.*

Friday: *For the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.*

Saturday: *For faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God’s Word on the Lord’s Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ’s holy gifts.*

In Our Prayers this Week — “Let us pray for...”

Baptismal Anniversaries: Abigail DePue (2/11), Kathleen Larson (2/13), Lynn Leider (2/16), Ashlynn Lueck, Doug Pon (2/17).

Wedding Anniversaries: Aaron and Jeanine Walentoski (2/14).

The Sick: Rolf Berntsen (father of Nicole Aidich) with pneumonia; Tammy Haga, Cindy Hirtz, Mary Ellen Nitzsche, Sharon Murphy, and Dawn Fredrich (recovering from surgery); Yet Ngor Wong (grandmother of Nicola Giordano) hospitalized with lung disease; Tom Smith (father of Christine Franklin), Rev. Dr. John Wille, Rev. Luke Boehringer, Jean Reuss, and Gabby Hartwig in cancer treatment.

Those in Hospice: Al Gabel and Karen (Mark Thoni’s aunt).

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

Hymn of the Week

“As Surely as I live, God Said” (stanzas 5-8)

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Looking forward to Invocabit Sunday — The First Sunday in Lent

February 18, 2024

Hymns: 564, 656, 529, 521, 600, 424

1 Samuel 17:40-51: *In the lowliness of His humiliation and suffering, Jesus looked to be weak in the face of the Goliath of Satan, sin, and death. How could a lowly Shepherd defeat this colossal giant? David in his battle with the Philistine giant is a picture of how Jesus defeated Satan, sin, and death for us. The five stones in his pouch signify the Law. In Jesus’ obedience unto death He fulfilled the Law and the judgment against us, thereby defeating Satan and crushing his head. Satan has no authority over us because Jesus has defeated him. Like Goliath, Satan boasted of his power in egotistical pride. Like David, Jesus gave all glory to His Father and relied upon Him alone: “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel ... the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s.”*

2 Corinthians 6:1-10: *As long as we live, the Lord’s call remains constant: “Now is the day of salvation! Come to Me!”*

Matthew 4:1-11: *“Man does not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” Every step of the way in His time of testing and temptation from the evil one, Jesus quoted Scripture and defended Himself and the honor of His Father with the Word of God. Even when Satan twisted and misused God’s Word, Jesus countered by faithfully proclaiming God’s Word in reply. As strange as it sounds to our ears, Jesus did not even rely upon Himself; instead, He relied solely upon His Father’s good and gracious Word. He was faithful unto death that we might be rescued from every manifestation of unfaithfulness from our sinful nature.*