

The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
For the Week of the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2026, through September 20, 2026*

Catechesis Notes for the Week— The Seventh and Eighth Commandments — By the Seventh Commandment, “You shall not steal,” God desires to protect His gifts of property, and that we help and serve our neighbor in the preservation of what belongs to him. Jesus fulfilled the Seventh Commandment by using all of His property in loving service to us, without counting the cost. By the Eighth Commandment, “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.” God desires to protect His gifts of a good name and reputation, and that we help our neighbor preserve his honor. The Eighth Commandment forbids gossip, even though the words that we speak might be true. By gossip we do not cover our neighbor’s sins, but hurt and harm his reputation, which God has not given us to do. Jesus’ catechesis on the Eighth Commandment in the Sermon on the Mount teaches us that He is the fulfiller of this commandment. He blesses those who curse Him. He prays for those who persecute Him. By His Words He bestows upon us the Good Name of God, covering our sin with His mercy, that we might confess Him with our tongue in words of blessing and prayer on behalf of our neighbor. Jesus’ love in fulfillment of the Law is seen in the cross where He prays for His enemies and preaches the Gospel to the penitent thief. The verse for the week emphasizes that “love is the fulfillment of the Law”—love that gives of itself for the welfare and benefit of another, even and especially if they are undeserving. Christ fulfilled the Law for us in His loving sacrifice upon the cross. His love takes shape in us as we learn to live by faith in His forgiveness and mercy.

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: Forgive Us that We Might Forgive Others

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.

Psalms 103:1-12 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on Psalm 103: Almighty and everlasting God, of Your great mercy in Jesus Christ You have granted us forgiveness of sin and all things pertaining to life and godliness. Send us Your Holy Spirit that He may so rule our hearts that we, being ever mindful of Your fatherly mercy, may serve You in holiness and pureness of living and may give You continual thanks for all Your goodness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	78	80	82, 84	85	88	89	91	92
Evening	79	81	83	86	87	90	93	94

Bible Readings for the Week:

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Parable of the Unmerciful Servant—Matthew 18:21-35	
Monday	Holy Cross Day—John 12:20-33	1 Cor. 1:18-35
Tuesday	The Profane Fire of Nadab and Abihu—Leviticus 10:1-7	Hebrews 7:20-28
Wednesday	The Day of Atonement—Leviticus 16:1-17 (18-19) 20-22, 34	Hebrews 8:1-13
Thursday	The Lord Commands a Census of Israel—Numbers 1:1-4, 17-19, 45-54	Hebrews 9:1-10
Friday	The Levites Are Called to Serve as Priests—Numbers 3:1-16, 39-51	Hebrews 9:11-22
Saturday	Our God Will Abundantly Pardon—Isaiah 55:6-9	Phil 1:12-14, 19-30

The Catechism: Ten Commandments—Seventh and Eighth Commandments

What is the Seventh Commandment? You shall not steal.	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 +
What is the Eighth Commandment? You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.	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 +
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Prayers: Collects for the Week, Daily Themes for Prayer, and In Our Prayers at Peace

Collect for the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Collect for Holy Cross Day

Merciful God, Your Son, Jesus Christ, was lifted high upon the cross that He might bear the sins of the world and draw all people to Himself. Grant that we who glory in His death for our redemption may faithfully heed His call to bear the cross and follow Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

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

Sunday: *For the joy of the resurrection among us*
Monday: *For faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one’s calling and daily work*
Tuesday: *For deliverance against temptation and evil and those struggling with besetting sins*
Wednesday: *For marriage and family*
Thursday: *For the Church and her pastors; and for fruitful and salutary use of the Lord’s Supper*
Friday: *For the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the persecuted and oppressed*
Saturday: *For the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away from Christ*

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

Baptismal anniversaries: Pete Greschner, Bob Rothe, Christine Sawatzki (9/14); Jeanne Scholz (9/15); Daniel Haga (9/16); Jacob Rank (9/17); Kelsey DePue, Stan Heine (9/18).

Wedding anniversaries: Lee and Cathie Weber (9/16); Jason and Cathy Petersen (9/17).

In remembrance: We, along with the Koplring family, remember Clara Schiellack and give thanks to God for the loving-kindness of the Lord shown to and through her during her life.

The sick: Ted Aufdemberge (Tom Aufdemberge’s father), hospitalized in Iowa City. Annette Quill (friend of Sharon Murphy) recently moved to memory care; Rueben Roe recovering from knee-replacement surgery; John Lehman and Jodi Winn in rehab.

In cancer treatment: Ron Schaefer, undergoing surgery for lung cancer on September 16; Heide Schaff undergoing surgery for breast cancer on Sept 17; Terry O’Neill undergoing surgery for cancer on September 30; Art Klausmeier (Mark Goltermann’s cousin) who has exhausted treatment options; Barbara Galis (Nick Galis’ grandmother) undergoing chemotherapy; Bob Rothe, Michael Piper (Bob Piper’s brother), Michael Gehl (friend of the Bruss family), Mary O’Flyng (acquaintance of the Rothe family), Loretta Lampen, Tracy Espinosa, Ken Hinckle, Diane Bulawa, and Rev. Luke Boehringer.

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

Hymn of the Week

“Abide, O Dearest Jesus” (Stanzas 1-3)

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Looking forward to the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 20A)

September 20, 2026

Hymns: 726, 555, 628, 559, 742, 573

Isaiah 55:6-9: “My thoughts are not your thoughts” says the Lord is a reference to the fact that human thoughts always tend to be governed by works-righteousness when it comes to salvation and that God’s thoughts are always governed by grace. It is precisely because His thoughts toward us are governed by grace that we may “Seek the Lord ...” and “Call upon Him” in every need and struggle with sin.

Philippians 1:2-14, 19-30: Paul expresses thanks to God for the faith of the Philippian Christians and for their partnership with Him in the Gospel, confident that God will continue His good work in them and bring it to completion.

Matthew 20:1-16: The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard teaches us that salvation is a free gift of God’s grace and is dependent upon nothing in the person who is being saved. The workers in the parable are all paid the same wage regardless of how long they worked. This is the language of grace. To put the term “worker” and “wage” together in a discussion of salvation certainly sounds as if we are saved by our works. But when everyone is “paid” the same thing regardless of how long they worked it is clear that we are talking about something entirely different. Sinners are called to faith in Christ at every age of their lives. Where there is faith there is a busy and active life of love in good works toward the neighbor. The works do not save; they serve the neighbor and give testimony to the faith of the heart. In the end, all the workers are “paid the same wage” because salvation is of the Lord alone who redeemed each one of us by His blood. “It is lawful” for Jesus “to do what [He] wishes with His salvation.”