

# The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer*

*For the Second Week After Easter*

*April 15, 2007 through April 22, 2007*

**Catechesis Notes for the Week — Associating with Sinners—the Ministry of Absolution**—The ministry of private absolution is retained in the church because of God's passion to save the lost sinner. The baptized Christian still "daily sins much and deserves nothing but God's wrath and punishment." The devil, the world, and the Christian's own sinful nature wage an incessant war against faith in Christ. Holy Absolution is spoken that the Christian's faith in Christ might be restored and that his conscience might be comforted and strengthened against these attacks. Faith lives from the word of the Gospel. How wonderful it is that Christ's absolution comes to us sinners in many ways: Holy Baptism, the preaching of the Gospel to the congregation in the Divine Service, ongoing catechesis, the Lord's Supper, and even the comforting words of the Gospel spoken to us by our brothers and sisters in Christ. But it is also offered to us in the consolation our pastor is called to give us privately: Holy Absolution. Private absolution is a sermon of the sweetest Gospel for the individual sinner applied to the sinner's specific need. Like our Lord who received sinners and ate with them, the Lutheran pastor is called by God to associate with the members of his flock who are tormented by the weaknesses of their sinful nature and plagued by a bad conscience. He is called to believe that he has no greater work than to offer the comfort of Holy Absolution. (Luth. Cat. p. 201)

## 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: The Peace of Christ Reconciles Us to the Father.**

#### Invocation

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

#### Apostles' Creed

**Verse: 1 Corinthians 15:22**

**For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.**

#### Psalm 81 and/or the appointed daily psalms for listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: Almighty God, through the resurrection of Your Son, You have secured peace for our troubled consciences. Grant us this peace evermore, that trusting in the merit of Your Son we may come at last to the perfect peace of heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who loves 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	93	97	98	99	47	96	92	93
Evening	136, 117	124, 115	66, 116	8, 118	68, 113	50, 138	23, 114	136, 117

#### The Catechism: The Third Article

*What is the Third Article of the Creed?*

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Preschool +

*What does this mean?*

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

First Grade +

In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

Second Grade +

## Readings for Easter Week

Day	Bible Stories for the Family and Academy	Daily Prayer Readings from LSB, p. 299	
Sunday	Jesus Appears in the Upper Room—John 20:19-31	Exodus 20:1-24	Luke 4:1-15
Monday	The Resurrection According to St. Luke—Luke 24:1-12	Exodus 22:20-23:13	Luke 4:16-30
Tuesday	The Disciples on the Road to Emmaus—Luke 24:13-27	Exodus 23:14-33	Luke 4:31-44
Wednesday	Jesus Is Revealed in the Breaking of Bread—Luke 24:28-35	Exodus 24:1-18	Luke 5:1-16
Thursday	Jesus eats Broiled Fish in the Upper Room—Luke 24:33-49	Exodus 25: 1-22	Luke 5:17-39
Friday	Jesus Ordains the Apostles—John 20:19-31	Exodus 31:1-18	Luke 6:1-19
Saturday	Look ahead to Sunday's Readings	Exodus 32:1-14	Luke 6:20-38
Sunday	Jesus Is the Good Shepherd—John 10:11-16	Exodus 32:15-35	Luke 6:39-49

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

Collect for the Week of Easter II:

**Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

### Daily Themes for Prayer

- Sunday:** *Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; true and godly worship throughout the world; and the faithful preaching and hearing of God's Word.*
- Monday:** *Pray for faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; your calling and daily work; the unemployed; the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for government; and for peace.*
- Tuesday:** *Pray for deliverance against temptation; the addicted and despairing; the tortured and oppressed; and those struggling with besetting sins.*
- Wednesday:** *Pray for marriage and family; living together under the grace of Christ according to the Word of God; those adults who must rear their children alone; and godly schools, especially Peace Lutheran Academy, our church schools, and seminaries.*
- Thursday:** *Pray for the church and her pastors; for missionaries; fruitful and salutary use of the blessed sacrament of the Lord's body and blood.*
- Friday:** *Pray for the preaching of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; its spread throughout the whole world and our community; the persecuted.*
- Saturday:** *Pray for faithfulness to the end; the dying; the revival of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; receptive hearts for worship and study on the Lord's Day.*

In Our Prayers this Week

*Deacon Gatchell, recuperating from knee surgery.*

*Jeannine Gable, recuperating from cataract surgery.*

*The joy and confidence of the resurrection among us.*

*The mission of the Church and preaching of the Gospel throughout the world.*

### Lord's Prayer and Morning or Evening Prayer from the Catechism

Hymn of Week

**"Jesus Christ Is Risen Today"**

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**Look forward to the Third Sunday of Easter—Misericordias Domini**

**April 22, 2007**

**Hymns: 464, 266, Psalm 23, 709, 155, 710, 484**

**Ezekiel 34:11-16:** *The seeking Shepherd is a vivid description of the ministry of our Lord in both His death and the ongoing proclamation of His Word.*

**1 Peter 2:21-25:** *The "example" or pattern of Christ's sufferings is that He committed Himself to the Father who judges righteously.*

**John 10:11-16:** *Jesus said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." These words are spoken in the context of explaining that a hireling does not care for the sheep as the Good Shepherd does, but rather flees when he sees the wolf coming. The wolf is Satan. He attacks us by using our sin against us. We have no defense in ourselves. But we have a Good Shepherd. He stood up to the devil by laying down his life on our behalf. The devil was out for blood. He demanded that blood be shed because of sin. Jesus was the only One who could make atonement for our sin. He loved us to the point of laying down His life for us that we might be rescued from Satan and the condemnation of hell. The flock of Christ is kept safe solely by the forgiveness of sins which is ours in the Good Shepherd. The ministry of every pastor is to be patterned after the ministry of our Lord. As he loved us and laid down his life for our forgiveness, so pastors are to love their flocks and lay down their lives, so to speak, for the cause of proclaiming that Word of forgiveness that sets them free.*