

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer
For the Week of the First Sunday after Christmas
December 30, 2007 through January 6, 2008

Catechesis Notes for the Week — “**Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word**” – The Church’s liturgy has evolved since the early centuries of the Church and reflects the contributions of Christians in every age to their meditation upon the Gospel of Christ. The use of the *Nunc Dimittis*, Simeon’s song at the presentation of Jesus, as a post-communion canticle is one of the unique contributions of the Lutheran Church. When Simeon held in his arms the infant Christ, he confessed that he was beholding his salvation which the Lord had prepared before the face of all people. Beholding the infant Christ, he was now able to depart this life in the peace of the salvation that is in Christ. Similarly, when we partake of Jesus in the Lord’s Supper, we receive the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation and are able to “depart in peace” either to our earthly vocation or, if it is God’s will, to fall asleep in death. Partaking of Jesus’ true body and blood in the Sacrament is the partaking of our salvation, just as Simeon recognized that he was holding his salvation in his arms.

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: Receiving Christ, We May Depart This Life in Peace.

Invocation

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

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Galatians 4:4-5

**But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son,
born of a woman, born under the law,
to redeem those who were under the law,
that we might receive the adoption as sons.**

Psalm 111 and/or the appointed daily psalms for listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: O Lord God, heavenly Father, praise belongs to You, because You have fulfilled Your promises to Your People Israel in the incarnation of Your Son, and sent the light of Your truth to our fathers when they were walking in the ignorance of unbelief. Grant us steadfastly to trust Your covenant of grace that we may live in Christ. Make Your works of mercy and truth known to our children, that they may praise Your name in generations to come; 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	93	98	97	48	111	103	99	72
Evening	89:1-18, 19-52	45, 96	99, 8	45, 29	107, 15	93, 97	96, 110	100, 67

The Catechism: The Lord’s Prayer—The Seventh Petition

What is the Seventh Petition?

But deliver us from evil

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, in summary,
that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul,
possessions and reputation,
and finally, when our last hour comes, give us a blessed end,
and graciously take us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

Preschool +

Second Grade +

Readings for the Week of the First Sunday after Christmas

Day	Bible Stories for the Family and Academy	Daily Prayer Readings from LSB, p. 299	
Sunday	The Slaughter of the Holy Innocents—Matthew 2:13-23	Isaiah 58:1-59:3, 14-21	Luke 1:26-38
Monday	No School—Christmas Break—Follow LSB Daily Lectionary	Isaiah 60:1-22	Luke 1:39-56
Tuesday	No School—Christmas Break for the week	Isaiah 61:1-11	Luke 1:57-80
Wednesday	No School—Christmas Break	Isaiah 62:1-12	Luke 2:1-20
Thursday	No School—Christmas Break	Isaiah 63:1-14	Luke 2:21-40
Friday	No School—Christmas Break	Isaiah 63:15-65:2	Luke 2:41-52
Saturday	Look ahead to Sunday’s readings	Isaiah 65:8-25	Luke 3:1-20
Sunday	Look ahead to Sunday’s readings	Isaiah 66:1-20	Luke 3:21-38

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

Collect for the First Sunday after Christmas:

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature, Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Daily Themes for Prayer

- Sunday:** Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.
Monday: Pray 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: Pray for deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.
Wednesday: Pray 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: Pray 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: Pray 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: Pray 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

- The preaching of the Gospel throughout the world.
The family of Mel Gall who mourn his death.
Don Weber, undergoing leg by-pass surgery this week.
Rudy Heling, receiving therapy after surgery for a broken hip.
Elanore Goodwill, friend of the Verages, suffering with cancer.

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

Hymn of Week

"Let All Together Praise Our God"

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Look forward to the Epiphany of Our Lord

January 6, 2007

Hymns: 396, 395, 398, 399, 397

Isaiah 60:1-6: When Isaiah says "Your light" he means the Gospel which sets you free from death and sin. These words arouse believers, even the weak, so we are not offended by persecution, nor by the fact that there are so few Christians. Isaiah says that in spite of every dark thing we see around us, there is a light. And the brightness of this divine light rises in our world by preaching the Gospel. Summary: Believe while you have the light, and make use of it in an accepted time. Diligently learn and study the Word and grow in its understanding, so that we may be filled with the light of this glory. Those who regard this light as a treasure think all the worldly glories to be nothing. This is what we see in the martyrs. By comparison with the Word they spurned all things. Therefore He admonishes us not to pass this preaching by in vain, for in it there is announced the opening of heaven, the closing of hell, and the destruction of death. In this way He wants us to hold fast to the Word. —Martin Luther

Ephesians 3:1-12: The Apostle Paul catechizes the Church in the nature of the Gospel and its effect upon the world. The mystery of the saving Word is that it is based entirely upon grace alone and not human merit. This is why the promise of salvation is extended to all. The Gospel, therefore, breaks down the wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile, the sinner and God.

Matthew 2:1-12: The magi from the East who came to worship Jesus, the King of the Jews, were ancient astronomers, scientists, or "wisemen" as they are sometimes called. The star that they saw rise in the East was a sign from God, according to the Scriptures, which led them to Jerusalem and then Bethlehem to worship Jesus. The Holy Gospel for Epiphany reveals Jesus the dramatic contrast between faith born of the Word of God and the wickedness of unbelief which refuses to hear the call to repentance and trust in the Messiah of Holy Scripture. The amazing gifts of the wisemen illustrate that they knew who He was. Gold confesses Him as the King of Kings and was used in Jewish worship in the construction of the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. Frankincense confesses Him as the priest of all priests and was used by the priest in confessing sin and crying out to the Lord before the Altar of Incense. Myrrh was anointing oil used for the anointing of kings and priests, and for the preparing of bodies for burial. It confesses Him to be the Messiah who came into the world to make the ultimate sacrifice for sin. Epiphany reveals Jesus as the Savior of all people, Jew and Gentile alike.