

# The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer  
 For the Week of the Third Sunday after Epiphany  
 January 22, 2012 through, January 29, 2012

**Catechesis Notes for the Week—Baptism’s Power Is in the Word** — The Catechism states that “the Word of God in and with the water” of Holy Baptism is what gives Baptism its power to work “forgiveness of sins, rescue from death and the devil, and give eternal salvation to all who believe this.” Take away the Word and you have nothing but water; but with the Word you have a life-giving water, rich in grace, and the washing of the rebirth in the Holy Spirit. The Bible Stories for this week continue to highlight the power of the Word in, with, and under the water of Baptism. By the Word of the Lord the heavens were opened for forty days and forty nights in the divine judgment of the great flood and Noah and His family were saved through water. By the Word of the Lord, God saved the children of Israel through the water of the Red Sea and destroyed Pharaoh and his armies. By the Word of the Lord, the waters of the Jordan parted and Israel was drawn into the promised land. By the Word of the Lord, the water of the Jordan cleansed Naaman of his leprosy and even brought him to the faith that confessed that the God of Israel was, indeed, the Lord and the only true God. In all of these stories there are two common themes. First, the water was very very real, it was no symbol, and it carried both the condemnation and the salvation of God. Second, the Word of God itself was real and God joined Himself to the water by His Word in order to accomplish His saving work. To despise the water was to despise the Word. To despise the Word was to reject the water. The water and the Word were inseparably joined together by God. Why is this so important? It is by the Word in tangible water that we come to receive salvation and that we come to know that salvation with absolute and unshakeable certainty.

## 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: If Anyone Is in Christ, He Is a New Creation!

#### Invocation

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

#### Apostles’ Creed

Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;  
 old things have passed away;  
 behold, all things have become new.

Psalm: 62 and/or the appointed daily psalms listed below.

Prayer on the Psalm: Lord God, our heavenly Father, You are a sure refuge in need, grant us to love one another and to honor and obey those whom You have placed in authority over us. Teach us by Your Spirit to trust in You alone and not to rely upon ourselves for either life or salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	112, 113	115	117, 118	119:1-24	119:49-72	119:89-112	119:137-152	122, 123
Evening	114	116	120, 121	119:25-48	119:73-88	119:113-136	119:153-176	124

#### The Catechism: the Sacrament of Holy Baptism— Part III

How can water do such great things? Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water. For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three:	Third Grade +
He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying. [Titus 3:5-8]	Kindergarten + First Grade + Second Grade +

**Readings for the week of the Third Sunday after Epiphany**

Day	Bible Stories for the Family and Academy	Daily Prayer Readings from LSB, p. 299	
Sunday	<b>Jesus Calls the Four Fishermen—Mark 1:14-20</b>	Joel 2:1-17	Romans 11:1-24
Monday	Repeat Sunday’s Gospel	Joel 2:18-32	Rom. 11:25-12:13
Tuesday	Noah and the Flood—Gen. 6:5, 13, 17-19; 7:11-12, 16-17, 21-23; 9:1	Joel 3:1-21	Rom. 12:14-13:14
Wednesday	The Red Sea—Exodus 13:17—14:31	Zech. 1:1-21	Rom. 14:1-23
Thursday	Israel Crosses the Jordan—Joshua 1:1-2, 10-11; 3:1-17	Zech. 2:1-3:10	Rom.15:1-13
Friday	Naaman’s Leprosy Is Cleansed—2 Kings 5:1-14	Zech. 4:1-5:11	Rom. 15:14-33
Saturday	Look Ahead to Sunday’s Readings	Zech. 6:1-7:14	Rom. 16:17-27
Sunday	Look Ahead to Sunday’s Readings	Zech. 8:1-23	2 Tim. 1:1-18

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

*Collect for the week of the Third Sunday after Epiphany:*

**Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities and stretch forth the hand of Your majesty to heal and defend us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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 family of Kevin Hirtz who mourn his death.*

*Ron Allred at Lindengrove Health Care Center, Menomonee Falls.*

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

**Hymn of the Week**

**“The Church’s One Foundation” (Stanza 1)**

**Looking forward to the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany** **January 29, 2012**

**Hymns:** 533, 842, 690, 849, 819

**Deuteronomy 18:15-20:** *The Lord promised to raise up a prophet like Moses who would preach the saving Word of God. Jesus is that prophet greater than Moses. His Word is truth, it gives life and rescues us from every evil. Only those preachers and prophets who preach according to the Word of Christ have the promise of the Lord’s blessing. Those who do not preach according to the Word of Christ are false prophets and stand under the condemnation of God.*

**1 Corinthians 8:1-13:** *Idols are not true gods, even though sinful man worships them as if they were. There is only one true God: “For us there is only one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.” It is because of our faith and knowledge of the true God that we are called to put no stumbling block for faith in the path of those who do not yet know our Savior and Lord. Even though we have great freedom in the Gospel, this freedom is not a license for us to offend the conscience of a weaker brother.*

**Mark 1:21-28:** *“Depart, you unclean spirit, and make room for the Holy Spirit!” This exorcism in the baptismal liturgy reflects the promise of Baptism that Christ delivers us from the devil. In the casting out of the demons, Jesus demonstrates that He is the Son of God and the Redeemer who has vanquished Satan. Jesus’ authority over the demons reveals Him as the true Savior from sin, death, and the devil’s power. Those who witnessed this miracle unwittingly put their finger on where the power over Satan is found: Jesus’ doctrine—His teaching! “What new doctrine is this?” “A new doctrine with authority,” that is to say, a new teaching that has the power to save and deliver from the power of Satan. This is what the Gospel is: the power of God to salvation. The Gospel is more than information; it is the life-giving power of God that is anchored in Jesus death and resurrection.*