The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer*

*for Gaudete (Advent 3)*

*December 17, 2023*

*Pray and confess aloud 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.*

**Catechesis Notes for the week** **– Psalm 103 – A Prayer in Praise of the Lord’s Mercy –** From the depths of his being David calls upon his own soul and all that is within him to bless the Lord for the Lord’s mercy and for every benefit that he receives from the grace of God. The Lord forgives all iniquity. He heals all diseases. He redeems one’s life from destruction. He crowns the believer with loving kindness and tender mercies. He satisfies us with good things. He renews our life. All of this flows from the mercy of God in Christ our Redeemer. In Jesus God has executed righteousness and worked justice for all who were oppressed by sin and death. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in mercy which He so freely and faithfully made known to Moses and the children of Israel. Though He afflicts us, He, nevertheless, lets go of His anger and does not punish us as we deserve. His mercy is as different from the world’s concept of mercy as the heavens are high above the earth. His forgiveness means that He has removed our transgressions from us, like a father who pities his children. The Lord knows that we are made from dust. We will flower but soon wither and fade. But His mercy endures forever, from everlasting to everlasting. All angelic ministers in heaven and earth bless the Lord and do His pleasure as they proclaim the excellencies of His love in the preaching of the Gospel

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

**Verse:** John 3:5-6 – Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

**Apostles’ Creed**

**Psalm of the Week: Psalm 103**

**Year II – Catechism Stories**

**Bible Readings for the Week**

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| Sunday | Gaudete Gospel – Matthew 11:2-10 |
| Monday | The Baptism of Our Lord – Matthew 3:1-6, 13-17 |
| Tuesday | Behold the Lamb of God – John 1: 19-34 |
| Wednesday | **Commemoration of Katharina von Bora Luther – John 3:25-30** |
| Thursday | Nicodemus Comes to Jesus by Night – John 3:1-16 |
| Friday | The Woman at the Well – John 4:1-30, 39-42 |
| Saturday | The Pool of Bethesda – John 5:1-15 |

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| **Catechism: Sacrament of Holy Baptism I and II** | **Grades** |
| *What is Baptism?*Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God’s command and combined with God’s word. | 3rd+ |
| *Which is that word of God?*Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matt. 28:19) | K+ |
| *What benefits does Baptism give?*It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare. | 3rd+ |
| *Which are these words and promises of God?*Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16) | 2nd+ |