The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer*

*for Septuagesima*

*January 28, 2024*

*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 107:1-16 – Thanksgiving for Eternal Mercy** – One of the most repeated phrases in the Psalter are the opening words of Psalm 107: “Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.” The Lord’s mercy is His undeserved loving-kindness toward us sinners in his son. It is the mercy of God that is the heart and core of our redemption. Psalm 107 calls the redeemed of the Lord to confess His mercy to everyone. He has delivered us by His mercy. He saves us by His mercy. Apart from His mercy we have no claim to any of the blessings of the Lord. Therefore, we confess His mercy to us as sinners before the world that others, too, may know, believe, and trust in His mercy. He has saved us from Satan. He rescues us from every distress. When we cry out to Him He answers us. He satisfies the longing soul with His good gifts. Even when He brought down the Children of Israel because of their rebellion and misbelief, He did so that they might return to His mercy as the fountain and source of their life. “Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!”

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

**Verse:** Isaiah 1:18 – “Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.”

**Apostles’ Creed**

**Psalm of the Week: Psalm 107:1-16**

**Year II – Catechism Stories**

**Bible Readings for the Week**

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| Sunday | Septuagesima Gospel – Matthew 20:1-16 |
| Monday | The Miraculous Catch of Fish – Luke 5:1-11 |
| Tuesday | Jesus Forgives the Paralytic – Matthew 9:1-13 |
| Wednesday | Jesus Sends Out the Twelve – Matthew 9:35 – 10:20, 40 |
| Thursday | Holy Absolution of the Erring Brother – Matthew 18:14-35 |
| Friday | **The Purification of Mary and Presentation of Our Lord – Luke 2:22-32** |
| Saturday | Sexagesima OT – Isaiah 55:10-13 |

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| **Catechism: Confession and Absolution** | **Grades** |
| *What is Confession?*  Confession has two parts. First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven. | K+ |
| *What is the Office of the Keys?*  The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent. | 1st+ |
| *Where is this written?*  This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” (John 20:22-23) | 2nd+ |
| *What do you believe according to these words?*  I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself | 3rd+ |