

## **The Congregation at Prayer**

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer for the Third Sunday in Advent  
(December 18<sup>th</sup> – December 24<sup>th</sup>)*

### **CATECHETICAL THEME:**

*The Liturgy of Confession*

#### **This Week's Catechetical Theme: The Liturgy of Confession**

To have peace with God is to have nothing standing between you and God, to be in full communion with him. Such peace is what Jesus came to bring to a sinful humanity, who would otherwise be separated from God for eternity. This peace is demonstrated on the evening of the first Easter when Jesus came into that locked room full of fearful disciples and said, "Peace be with you." He then told them that He would be sending them to bring this peace to others. And how would they be bringing this peace? In the forgiveness of sins: "If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven" (John 20:23). This week's devotional material puts before us the promise of forgiveness that Jesus speaks to those who have confessed their sins. God bless your time in His Word!

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

#### **The Ten Commandments & The Apostles' Creed**

#### **The Catechism:**

*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.

<b>Daily Readings</b>	<b>Catechetical Narrative</b>	<b>Second Reading</b>	<b>Psalm</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>The Testimony of John the Baptist John 1:19-28</b>	<b>Luke 18</b>	<b>Psalm 148</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>As Far as the East Is From the West Psalm 103:8-13</b>	<b>Luke 19</b>	<b>Psalm 149</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>If You Forgive the Sins of Anyone John 20:19-23</b>	<b>Luke 20</b>	<b>Psalm 150</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>New Every Morning Lamentations 3:19-23</b>	<b>Luke 21</b>	<b>Psalm 1</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>I Will Give You Rest Matthew 11:27-30</b>	<b>Luke 22</b>	<b>Psalm 2</b>

<b>Friday</b>	<b>He Will Save His People Matthew 1:18-21</b>	<b>Luke 23</b>	<b>Psalm 3</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Exodus 40:17-21, 34-38/Titus 3:4-7</b>	<b>Luke 24</b>	<b>Psalm 4</b>

### Questions to Discuss in the Home

**Sun:** Reflect upon today’s text and sermon. **Mon:** What does this passage teach us about the mercy and grace of God? **Tues:** What are the first words that Jesus speaks to His disciples? What are they going to speak to others? How is peace connected to the forgiveness of sins? **Wed:** Will the mercy and grace of God wear out? How often will it be repeated for us? **Thurs** How might a person become “heavy laden” by his work? How will Jesus give rest? **Fri:** From what does Jesus save His people? How do we know this applies to us? **Sat:** In preparation for Sunday, reflect upon today’s texts.

### Memory Verse

“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.” (John 20:22-23)

### In Our Prayers this Week

**For Those Recovering from Surgery:** Marla Corry, Lynn Michael, Adrienne Childress (mother of David Childress). **For Those Undergoing Medical Treatments:** Alan Kleiboeker, Beth Jones (daughter-in-law of Mike Jones), Joe Childress (father of David Childress), Beth Mayer (niece of Mia Zimmermann). **For Those in Need of Healing:** Rodney Tate (father of Randy Tate), Roger & Marilyn Sullens (father & mother of Linda Reckling). **For Those Who Are Dealing with Chronic Pain:** Barb Mueller, Sam Tepe (brother of Angie Siddell), Ariana Nolte, Randy Zimmermann, Connie Schilling. **Homebound Members:** Earlene Lange, Ruth Onken, Paul Schierschwitz. **Baptismal Birthdays:** Nicole Goolsby (12/18), Parklynn Hanke (12/19), Glen Edwards, Randy Tate, Calvin Yardley (12/20), Alan Edwards (12/22), Bradley Nolte (12/23), Stefanie Jennings (12/24).

### The Lord’s Prayer and Morning or Evening Prayer From the Small Catechism

**Hymn of the Week:** O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (LSB 357)