

## **The Congregation at Prayer**

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer for the week following  
Septuagesima (February 5<sup>th</sup> – February 11<sup>th</sup>)*

### **CATECHETICAL THEME:**

***The Essential Work of a Pastor***

#### **This Week's Catechetical Theme: The Essential Work of a Pastor**

As a pastor serves the people of God, he is asked to carry out a wide range of tasks. He will perform administrative tasks around the church. He will carry out the duties of an evangelist: calling on those who have been absent, teaching those who are new to the faith, and caring for all in the process. He will also engage in specific acts of pastoral care: visiting the sick and dying, bringing the Lord's Supper to those who are unable to attend Divine Service, praying for all, and encouraging the downtrodden with God's wonderful promises. Of course, there are sermons to prepare and preach; multiple Bible classes to prepare and teach; hymns to select and a host of other tasks that must be done. With this extensive list, both the pastor and the people can forget those things that are essential to the pastoral office—those things which Christ instituted the office to carry out. This week's catechetical material reminds us of the essential work of a pastor—work which is given by Christ Himself.

**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.

*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)

*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.

| Daily Readings | Catechetical Narrative                             | Second Reading | Psalm    |
|----------------|--|----------------|----------|
| Sunday         | Laborers in the Vineyard<br>Matthew 20:1-16        |                | Psalm 47 |
| Monday         | Joshua to Succeed Moses<br>Numbers 27:15-23        | Exodus 19      | Psalm 48 |
| Tuesday        | Against the Shepherds of Israel<br>Ezekiel 34:1-10 | Exodus 20      | Psalm 49 |
| Wednesday      | Feed My Sheep<br>John 21:15-19                     | Exodus 21      | Psalm 50 |
| Thursday       | The Harvest Is Plentiful<br>Matthew 9:35-38        | Exodus 22      | Psalm 51 |
| Friday         | Shepherd the Flock of God<br>1 Peter 5:1-11        | Exodus 23      | Psalm 5  |
| Saturday       | Isaiah 55:10-13                                    | Hebrews 4:9-13 | Psalm 53 |

### Questions to Discuss in the Home

**Sun:** Reflect upon today's text and sermon. **Mon:** To what are the people of God compared (v. 17)? How was Moses like a shepherd? And how will Joshua continue to be like a shepherd? To what will Joshua lead the people? **Tues:** To whom is this judgment spoken against? Of what were the shepherds guilty of? **Wed** Do you remember what Peter had done three times to Jesus (see Jn 18:15ff)? What is the significance of asking the question three times? What is Peter given to do? **Thurs:** Why does Jesus have compassion on the crowds? What do the people need? For what does Jesus tell the disciples to pray? **Fri:** The word “elders” in this passage refers to those who serve in the Office of the Holy Ministry (to pastors). What tasks are the pastors exhorted to carry out? **Sat:** In preparation for Sunday, reflect upon today's texts.

### Memory Verse

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

### In Our Prayers this Week

**For Those Recovering from Surgery:** Sylvia Kleiboeker, Earl Schneider, Lynn Michael. **For Those Undergoing Medical Treatments:** Marla Corry, 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:** Alan Kleiboeker, 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. **Baptismal Birthday:** Roger Zimmermann, Jordan Kleiboeker (2/5), Tayler Albers (2/6), Gage Gehrs, Sherri Williams (2/9), Darrell Brink (2/11). **Anniversary:** Matt & Angie Nolte (2/11).

**The Lord's Prayer and Morning or Evening Prayer From the Small Catechism**  
**Hymn of the Week:** Salvation unto Us Has Come (LSB 555)