

Congregation at Prayer
✠ Sixth Sunday of Easter ✠

*A Guide for Daily Family Prayer
For the Week of May 6th to 12th*

“This Mystery is Profound...”

Responsive Prayer 2, *Lutheran Service Book* p.285

Catechesis Notes for the Week...

Chief of all vocations are the offices of husband and wife. From this union, as the Scriptures often say, “*The two become one flesh*” (Gen 2:24; Mt 19:5; 1 Cor 6:16; Eph 5:31). This is what we call *marriage*: a husband and a wife coming together as *one flesh*.

Marriage is God’s gift. The Lord loves His people and desires to give them every good gift. To do this He instituted marriage. Much more than a piece of paper, or a contract, marriage is a gift from God where He gives unity and companionship. From marriage our Lord gives the gift of children—hence, families. It’s within this marriage that our Lord protects and guides and keeps us in the faith. And it’s from the family that everything else flows.

It’s obvious to all that marriage is being attacked by Satan. If he can just overthrow marriage, he thinks, then he can overthrow the government, and the family, and education, and, ultimately, the Church, the bride of Christ.

How does Satan attack the marriage office? One way, big in the news now, is through homosexual unions. But this is only one way that marriage is attacked. Perhaps more severe is the more subtle: living-together apart from marriage. To be perfectly honest, “*living-together*” is just a common expression for having sex outside the benefit of marriage. In short, it’s adultery—a denial of God’s holy institution and will for marriage.

But marriage is the place where man honors woman and woman receives from man. In marriage, he’s given to care and protect and provide every good gift—just as God would have for His bride, the Church. And in marriage the wife is to receive all he gives by grace and with tremendous joy—just as the Church receives every good gift from Christ. But this joyful gift-giving and gift-receiving is denied when the couple denies marriage.

So what should the man and woman do who live together *apart* from the Lord’s gift of marriage? First and foremost, they should delight in our Lord’s gift-giving. Chief among His gifts is repentance, which is our Lord turning to us and calling us to recognize our sin against His word, and then hearing the absolution He desires for us. Then, under our Lord’s kindness, they may join in the gift of marriage. In doing so, Satan is again shown to be defeated. The victory is won! The Bridegroom has entered the chamber with His bride, the Church—*the two have become one flesh*. Paul calls this a profound mystery. Marriage refers to Christ and the Church.

Learn-By-Heart Scripture...

Ephesians 5:31-32

*“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife,
and the two shall become one flesh.”*

This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Learn-By-Heart Catechism...

Table of Duties

To Husbands

1 Peter 3:7

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Colossians 3:19

Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

To Wives

Ephesians 5:22

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

1 Peter 3:5-6

For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

Daily Readings...

Monday (5/6): Numbers 8:5-26; Luke 15:11-32

Tuesday (5/7): Numbers 9:1-23; Luke 16:1-18

Wednesday (5/8): Numbers 10:11-36; Luke 16:19-31

Thursday (5/9) Ascension:* Numbers 11:1-23, 31-35; Luke 17:1-19

Friday (5/10): Numbers 11:24-29; 12:1-16; Luke 17:20-37

Saturday (5/11): Numbers 13:1-3, 17-33; Luke 18:1-17

Sunday (5/12): Numbers 14:1-25; Luke 18:18-34

Prayer of the Week...

O God, the Giver of all that is good, by Your holy inspiration grant that we may think those things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Psalms of the Week...

Psalm 145

Hymn of the Week...

“Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice!” 556

Looking Forward to Next Week...

Ascension: Acts 1:1-11

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24:44-53

Sunday: Acts 1:12-26

Revelation 22:1-20

John 17:20-26