

Congregation at Prayer
✠ Last Sunday of the Church Year ✠

A Guide for Daily Family Prayer
For the Week of November 25th to December 1st

Catechesis Notes for the Week...

“I believe that I cannot...believe”—that’s what we confess with the 3rd article of the Creed. I can’t do it. I can’t work, I can’t try, I can’t decide or choose or will life into my sinful bones—God must *give* it! And He does this giving—especially the gifting of faith—by the Holy Spirit. It’s the Spirit who calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies. It’s the Spirit who binds Himself to the Word—you won’t find Him anywhere else!

In fact, if you want to know whether the Spirit is at work amongst you, or in this Church, or anywhere else, for that matter, then be quiet for a minute and listen—do you hear the word of God? Do you hear the Gospel of sins forgiven for Christ’s sake alone? If you hear of Christ crucified for you, then you’ve heard the work of the Spirit and you know He’s there at work amongst you. Otherwise—no cross of Christ, no Gospel, no sins forgiven—the Holy Spirit *isn’t* there.

It’s by this Spirit that you received Christ. And not only that, but by this Spirit you have confessed Christ, saying, “*Jesus is Lord.*” And it’s by Christ that you are able to see and know the Father. And so, while we confess the Creed in the order of Father-Son-Spirit; we actually only know God in the opposite order: Spirit-Son-Father! And it all starts then in the Word, the Gospel, the preaching that you are declared free and forgiven in Christ.

So when we confess the Holy Spirit we confess preaching; we confess the Gospel; we confess the Church; we confess the communion of the holy things by those also made holy and forgiven by this Word; we confess our own resurrection and life everlasting with Christ.

The Holy Spirit comes bearing great and many gifts. His work is often overlooked, though, because it’s so ordinary, so human. And because of that, we try to come up with ways of recognizing the Spirit. We try to imagine Him apart from the Word—blowing about in our feelings. But He attaches Himself to the Word and by that Word He works. Ordinary? Sure. But when the results of His work are *the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting*...you might say extraordinary!

The Spirit Preaches Christ to You

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

Learn-By-Heart Scripture...

1 Corinthians 12:3

“Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.”

Learn-By-Heart Catechism...

The Creed

What is the Third Article?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

Daily Readings...

Monday (11/25): Daniel 5:1-30; Revelation 21:9-27

Tuesday (11/26): Daniel 6:1-28; Revelation 22:1-21

Wednesday (11/27): Isaiah 1:1-28; 1 Peter 1:1-12

Thursday (11/28): Isaiah 2:1-22; 1 Peter 1:13-25

Friday (11/29): Isaiah 5:1-25; 1 Peter 2:1-12

Saturday (11/30): Isaiah 6:1-7:9; 1 Peter 2:13-25

Sunday (12/1): Isaiah 7:10-8:8; 1 Peter 3:1-22

Prayer of the Week...

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Psalm of the Week...

Psalm 134

Hymn of the Week... “Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying”

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Looking Forward to Next Week...

Isaiah 2:1-5

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 21:1-11