

Congregation at Prayer
✠ The Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord ✠

*A Guide for Daily Family Prayer
For the Week of March 3rd to March 9th*

Catechesis Notes for the Week...

The Office of the Keys is the Office of the Holy Ministry. The pastor has been given the responsibility and the authority to speak what our Lord speaks also in heaven. He has been trained, examined, called, and ordained. And most important of all, he is this *for you*.

The Office of the Keys, our Catechism says, *is that special authority which Christ has given to His Church*. St. Luke says it this way:

***The one who hears you hears Me,
and the one who rejects you rejects Me,
and the one who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.*** (10:16)

This special authority comes from God alone. Though the seminary may seem at times similar to Hogwarts (from *Harry Potter*), it's nothing of the sort. Hogwarts trains young witches and warlocks in the art of magic. The seminary trains men in the Truth of Christ, found in the Scriptures and used for the care of the flock. Magic runs in the realm of power—faith, on the other hand, is always given; and it is given by the Word of Truth.

This Office of the Keys is also not given for the pastor to feel really puffed up and prideful. As one charged with the authority of the keys, he is a *servant* of the Word. The pastor stands *in the stead and by the command of Christ*. And he does it all for you.

That's the way our Lutheran Confessions put it:

So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted.

Augsburg Confession, V

The Office of the Keys, or the Pastoral ministry, is given so that you could hear the Gospel, receive the salvation won for you in Christ, and be fed, nourished, sustained until your last breath. As concrete as your sin is, even more concrete is the forgiveness of that sin in Christ.

That's what this Office of the Keys is for: to speak you into heaven!

Being Spoken into Heaven

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

Learn-By-Heart Scripture...

Matthew 16:19

*“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven,
and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,
and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”*

Learn-By-Heart Catechism...

Confession

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)

Daily Readings...

Monday (3/3): Job 34:10-33; John 11:17-37

Tuesday (3/4): Job 36:1-21; John 11:38-57

Wednesday (3/5): Genesis 1:1-19; Mark 1:1-13

Thursday (3/6): Genesis 1:20-2:3; Mark 1:14-28

Friday (3/7): Genesis 2:4-25; Mark 1:29-45

Saturday (3/8): Genesis 3:1-24; Mark 2:1-17

Sunday (3/9): Genesis 4:1-26; Mark 2:18-28

Prayer of the Week...

O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Your beloved Son You confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah. In the voice that came from the bright cloud You wonderfully foreshowed our adoption by grace. Mercifully make us co-heirs with the King in His glory and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through the same 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 99

Hymn of the Week... “ ‘Tis Good, Lord, to Be Here”

414

Looking Forward to Next Week...

Ash Wednesday ~

Joel 2:12-19 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

First Sunday in Lent ~

Genesis 3:1-21 Romans 5:12-19 Matthew 4:1-11