

Congregation at Prayer
✠ First Sunday in Lent ✠

*A Guide for Daily Family Prayer
For the Week of March 10th to 16th*

Catechesis Notes for the Week...

It doesn't get more beautiful than what Nathan said to David in our *Learn-by-Heart Scripture* for this week. It's quite simple, direct, and to the point: "*The Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die!*"

You'd have to go back and read all of 2 Sam 11-12 for the context, but briefly this is what follows David's sin with Bathsheba. It follows David's deceit and lies and murder and adultery and coveting and stealing. In a word, it follows David's *sin*. But even with all this sin, David thought he got off the hook—no one knew!

No one, of course, but the Lord. And the Lord has a man, a prophet, who goes as the Lord's mouthpiece. Whatever the Lord says the prophet says. Nathan is the Lord's man. He shows David his sin (LAW). David recognizes his sin, which is first and foremost a sin against God Himself. Then David confesses his sin—that's the first part of our Scripture this week: "*I have sinned against the Lord.*" With such a confession we know the LAW has done its work—it has killed David's self-trust and stripped him of any hope within him.

Then comes the other word (GOSPEL), which forgives David and delivers the work of Christ for him. That's the Absolution (that is, forgiveness). In this case it has come from the called minister of Christ (Nathan) and is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with David Himself.

It's hard to find a better example of such a pure confession of sin and life-giving absolution as this one. So succinct, yet so powerful, this exchange between Nathan and David is also what takes place between you as sinner and your Pastor who is the Lord's man to forgive your sin. This is what absolution is all about: *the Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die!*"

This Lenten season, I encourage you to make use of the times available for Private Absolution. At Grace it will be offered on Wednesdays from 10:30-11:30am; at Trinity on Fridays from 4-5:30pm. Come and delight in surely not dying!

Surely Not Dying

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

Learn-By-Heart Scripture...

2 Samuel 12:13

David said to Nathan,

"I have sinned against the Lord."

And Nathan said to David,

"The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die."

Learn-By-Heart Catechism...

Confession

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...

Monday (3/10): Gen 6:1-7:5; Mark 3:1-19

Tuesday (3/11): Gen 7:11-8:12; Mark 3:20-35

Wednesday (3/12): Gen 8:13-9:17; Mark 4:1-20

Thursday (3/13): Gen 11:27-12:20; Mark 4:21-41

Friday (3/14): Gen 13:1-18; Mark 5:1-20

Saturday (3/15): Gen 15:1-21; Mark 5:21-43

Sunday (3/16): Gen 16:1-9, 15-17:22; Mark 6:1-13

Prayer of the Week...

O Lord God, You led Your ancient people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide the people of Your Church that following our Savior we may walk through the wilderness of this world toward the glory of the world to come; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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... "*All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall*

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Looking Forward to Next Week...

Midweek ~

Gen 1:1-5,24-31;2:1-7

1 Tim 6:2b-21

Matthew 16:13-21

Second Sunday in Lent ~

Genesis 12:1-9

Romans 4:1-8, 13-17

John 3:1-17