

Congregation at Prayer
✠ Second Sunday in Lent ✠

*A Guide for Daily Family Prayer
For the Week of March 17th to 23rd*

Catechesis Notes for the Week...

Many churches are divided today because we don't agree on what it is that rests on the altar on a Sunday morning. Is it Christ or not? This week's catechetical instruction highlights *what* the Sacrament of the Altar is. We Lutherans try to be as clear here as possible, and we try to say nothing more and nothing less than Christ Himself says!

"It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

That is, we confess that on the altar there's not a fake body, a pretend body, or a simply imagined body! The body and blood of Christ are *true*. That is, they're *real*. On the one hand, this is quite different from some other confessions that say the body and blood aren't *really* present, but *symbolically* present. Do you see the difference? Is Jesus here with His body and blood, or not?

On the other hand, we make sure we don't ignore what our eyes see, our tongues taste, and our nostrils smell:

"under the bread and wine..."

That is, the *true* body and blood of Christ comes to us *under* the bread and wine. Sometimes when we read Luther we find other words like "in" the bread, or "with" the wine. Many Lutherans learned long ago in Confirmation the formula: "*in, with, and under*" the bread and wine.

All this talk can get confusing quickly. If you want to know what it is that rests on the altar, look at what hung on the cross—it's the same Jesus. That's how the Church has always made this clear:

"What is in the chalice is the same as that which flowed from Christ's side." (St. John Chrysostom)

"Therefore, it is the same body which is on the cross and broken in the Supper, that is, divided and received." (Martin Chemnitz)

Any confession of the Supper that is less than this real presence, misses Christ. And I'd say that's a pretty big deal!

What (or Who) is on the Altar?

Responsive Prayer 2, Lutheran Service Book p.285

Learn-By-Heart Scripture...

1 Corinthians 10:16

The cup of blessing that we bless,

is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?

The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

Learn-By-Heart Catechism...

Sacrament of the Altar

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.

Where is this written?

The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul write: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Daily Readings...

Monday (3/17): Gen 18:1-15; Mark 6:14-34

Tuesday (3/18): Gen 21:1-21; Mark 6:35-56

Wednesday (3/19): Gen 22:1-19; Mark 7:1-23

Thursday (3/20): Gen 24:1-31; Mark 7:24-37

Friday (3/21): Gen 24:32-52, 61-67; Mark 8:1-21

Saturday (3/22): Gen 27:1-29; Mark 8:22-38

Sunday (3/23): Gen 27:30-45; 28:10-22; Mark 9:1-13

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 105

Hymn of the Week... "*The God of Abraham Praise*"

798

Looking Forward to Next Week...

Midweek ~ Gen 20:1-18 1 Thess 5:12-28 Luke 11:1-13

Second Sunday in Lent ~

Exodus 17:1-7 Romans 5:1-8

John 4:5-30, 39-42