

**Congregation at Prayer**  
**✠ Third Sunday in Lent ✠**

*A Guide for Daily Family Prayer  
For the Week of March 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>*

Catechesis Notes for the Week...

What's the point? Seriously, every week we gather together around the Lord's Altar, running through the same motions, saying the same prayers, eating and drinking the same bread and the same wine—what's the point? Does it do anything for me? Or are we just running through some empty ritual and pointless motions?

Jesus says,

*“Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day.”* (Jn 6:54)

And Luther, in his catechism, says:

*“These words, ‘Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,’ show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words.”*

Last week we noticed that what goes on at the altar is no symbol or make believe pretending. It's the real deal—not on account of magic, but because of the Word. Jesus' word does what it says; it makes what it proclaims. And with this Word, we have what He promises: His very (true!) body and blood *for the forgiveness of sins*.

Our sin has a tendency to belittle the forgiveness of sins. We think to ourselves: I've already been forgiven—can't I have something more? Isn't the Christian life *more* than the forgiveness of sins?

This sort of view shows that the importance of forgiveness is overlooked or misunderstood. “*For,*” Luther says, “*where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.*” And Jesus locates these benefits in His body and blood: “*for my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.*”

In, with, and under the bread and wine we receive the body and blood of Jesus. And receiving His body and blood, we receive forgiveness of sins. And by receiving forgiveness of sins, we also receive life (eternal life!) and salvation. With these benefits, is there anything else we could possibly want?

**Eternal Benefits in the Forgiveness of Sins**

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

Learn-By-Heart Scripture...

**John 6:54-55**

*Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.  
For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.*

Learn-By-Heart Catechism...

**Sacrament of the Altar**

**What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?**

These words, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,” show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

Daily Readings...

*Monday (3/24):* Gen 29:1-30; Mark 9:14-32  
*Tuesday (3/25):* Gen 35:1-29; Mark 9:33-50  
*Wednesday (3/26):* Gen 37:1-36; Mark 10:1-12  
*Thursday (3/27):* Gen 39:1-23; Mark 10:13-31  
*Friday (3/28):* Gen 40:1-23; Mark 10:32-52  
*Saturday (3/29):* Gen 41:1-27; Mark 11:1-19  
*Sunday (3/30):* Gen 41:28-57; Mark 11:20-33

Prayer of the Week...

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word; 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 84*

Hymn of the Week... “My Song Is Love Unknown”

430

Looking Forward to Next Week...

*Midweek ~* Ezek 37:1-14    1 Peter 3:13-22    John 3:1-8

*Fourth Sunday in Lent ~*

Isaiah 42:14-21    Ephesians 5:8-14    John 9:1-41