



A Guide for your Christian Life between Sundays

*The Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 30 through April 5, 2025*

Christ tells a story of a man who demands his inheritance of his father and leaves him for a strange country, there to forget his father's house, and enjoy a life of his own making. But in making his life, he unmakes himself. Through his reckless living, he is reduced to nothing, and has no option but to return to his father in fear. He does not ask much, merely a job, for he had no faith in his father's loving heart. But the father, seeing him far off, runs to him, embraces him, and returns him to sonship, ordering a feast in his honor. The son in this story is first of all mankind as a whole, who wished to kill God and become his own creator; but this led only to a world of misery, so he turns to God in fear, only to have found that God long before had come to him in love. But secondly, the son is every individual Christian who is embraced by the kiss of the Church and welcomed into the feast of Christ's sacrifice.

AN ORDER FOR DAILY MEDITATION AND PRAYER

Read the Scriptures appointed for the day, review the readings from Sunday, and learn by heart the appointed verse and portion of the Small Catechism. Conclude with the Psalms, the Collect, and the prayers, using the guidelines as you see appropriate.

DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, March 30	Psalm 60:1, 9-12	Gen. 41:28-57	Mark 11:20-33
Monday, March 31	Psalm 3	Gen. 42:1-34, 38	Mark 12:1-12
Tuesday, April 1	Psalm 37:16-20	Gen. 43:1-28	Mark 12:13-27
Wednesday, April 2	Psalm 26:1-7	Gen. 44:1-18, 32-34	Mark 12:28-44
Thursday, April 3	Psalm 82	Gen. 45:1-20, 24-28	Mark 13:1-23
Friday, April 4	Psalm 77:11-15	Gen. 47:1-31	Mark 13:24-37
Saturday, April 5	Psalm 44:1-4	Gen. 49:29—50:7, 14-26	Mark 14:1-11

A LOOK BACK TO THE LITURGY – MARCH 30, 2025

Theme: You, who hated the Father, are welcomed back into His house, clothed in baptism, and given the body and blood of the Son to feast upon.

Hymn: 612, “As Rebels, Lord, Who Foolishly Have Wandered”

Summary of Readings:

Isaiah 12:1-6: The Lord speaks to his prophet, describing what great joy there will be when God delivers his people from this earthly strife and the power of sin.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21: Paul proclaims the forgiveness won for us through Christ, and admonishes us to take on the righteousness of God, even as God in Christ took on the sin of man. We are to be a new creation before an unbelieving world.

Luke 15:1-3,11-32: Christ tells a parable about a son who, wishing his father dead, demands his inheritance in advance, and leaves for a foreign land to spend his being there in reckless living. Losing everything, he decides to return to his father to beg for work. When he returns, his father runs to embrace him, and will not allow his son to finish his request for work. Rather, he brings him a robe, a ring and orders a great feast to be prepared, for his son was dead, but is alive again.

MEMORY VERSE TO LEARN BY HEART:

Psalm 145:15-16: “The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing.”

THE CATECHISM: THE LORD’S PRAYER: FOURTH PETITION (PART 1)

(Important! If you have memorized a different translation in confirmation, it is best to pull out your old catechism and refresh your memory from those texts.)

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean? God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

PSALM OF THE WEEK: PSALM 32 (ESV)

¹Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ²Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. ³For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. ⁵I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. ⁶Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him. ⁷You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance. ⁸I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. ⁹Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you. ¹⁰Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD. ¹¹Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

LUTHER’S PRAYER ON PSALM 32¹:

O God, our heavenly Father, with whom is grace and much forgiveness, be merciful to us who were born in sin and cannot but sin and fall short every day. Forgive us our many transgressions and account them against us no more, but make us Your heirs through Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, who was delivered into death for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

¹ Reading the Psalms with Luther, CPH, 2007

DAILY THEMES FOR PRAYER – (From LSB page 294)

Sunday: Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.

Monday: Pray for faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.

Tuesday: Pray for deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.

Wednesday: Pray for marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.

Thursday: Pray for the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deacons, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood.

Friday: Pray for the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.

Saturday: Pray for faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.

IN OUR PRAYERS AT CHRIST:

Prayer Family: *Jo Miller* and her loved ones

Spencer & Claudia Barnes, (formerly Claudia Nelson of this congregation), who were recently married

The Family of Bill Cookston, who has entered eternal rest

Charles Stapleton, friend of Andrew Beauchamp, who has been diagnosed with cancer

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LUTHER'S MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Luther's Morning Prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.