

Congregation in Prayer Feb 14, 2016

Throughout the weekends in Lent we will be taking a look at the greatest story ever told – the account of the birth, life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This first week we began with an overlook of the STORY from an eternal perspective. We looked at John 1:1-18. Jesus, the eternal Word of God, was in the beginning with God, because He was God. When the time was just right, the Word took on human flesh and came into our world, born a baby in Bethlehem. Thus Jesus is both true God, begotten of His Father from all eternity and true man, born of the virgin, Mary. The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are His story. This will be our focus this season. [Jn 1:1-18; Jn 1:29-34]

The Order of Meditation and Prayer for Daily Use

(Pray and confess out loud as much of the Order of Meditation as possible)

Theme for the Week: The Greatest Story Ever Told
An eternal perspective on the STORY

Invocation (Spoken while making the sign of the cross to remember your baptism)
In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Apostle's Creed

Learn by Heart Verse (Practice saying this verse word for word, out loud, throughout the day)

1 Corinthians 11:26 (ESV) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

From the Catechism (Read together and discuss briefly)

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| What is Confession? <i>Confession has two parts. First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.</i> | First Grade + |
| What is the Office of the Keys? <i>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.</i> | Second Grade + |
| Where is this written? <i>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)</i> | Third Grade + |

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| <p>What do you believe according to these words? <i>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.</i></p> | <p>Fourth Grade +</p> |
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Daily Bible Readings

Monday: Lk 1:5-25 birth of John foretold
 Tuesday: Lk 1:26-38 birth of Jesus foretold
 Wednesday: Lk 1:39-56 Mary visits Elizabeth
 Thursday: Lk 1:57-66,80 birth of John the baptizer
 Friday: Mk 1:1-13 John begins ministry, baptizes Jesus
 Saturday: looking ahead

Daily Themes for Prayer:

Sunday: Pray for those who help lead us in worship: our Pastors, our Elders, our organists. Pray that God's people are actively engaged as they worship. Pray for those who serve in our military and for our chaplains as they proclaim the Gospel.

Monday: Pray for the unemployed and underemployed; pray for the homeless in our community; pray for the ministries of DayBreak and MorningStar in our community; pray for the ministry of Feed My Starving Children.

Tuesday: Pray for our CrossRoad Life Recovery ministry and its leaders. Pray that this important ministry would continue to expand among us and through us. Pray that it might impact other congregations and communities around the country.

Wed: Pray for the ministries of our congregation: Braille, CrossRoad Life Recovery, DayBreak, Operation Christmas Child, Quilters, Sunny Hill, Spiritual Vitamins. Pray that new ministries might be developed among us that will impact lives through our serving.

Thursday: Pray also for ministries in our community: Guardian Angel Home, Joliet Area Hospice, Lambs Fold, Living Alternatives, Stepping Stones, Trinity Services.

Friday: Pray for our communities and neighborhoods; for our words of witness and acts of mercy to our neighbors.

Saturday: Pray that people would see the need to come to worship this weekend. Pray that we would be a welcoming, non-judgmental community of faith for them as they come.

Lord's Prayer

Going with God's Blessing

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Looking Ahead (Take a look at the readings for next Sunday)

Matthew 1:18-25 The STORY begins in history
 Lk 2:1-20 Shepherds tell the STORY