

The Congregation at Prayer

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

The Week of Laetare (4th Sunday in Lent)

March 10, 2024, through March 17, 2024

Patristic Quote for the Week —AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (354-430AD): For who even now feeds the whole world, but He who creates the cornfield from a few grains? He therefore created as God creates. For, whence He multiplies the produce of the fields from a few grains, from the same source He multiplied in His hands the five loaves. The power, indeed, was in the hands of Christ; but those five loaves were as seeds, not indeed committed to the earth, but multiplied by Him who made the earth. In this miracle, then, there is that brought near to the senses, whereby the mind should be roused to attention, there is exhibited to the eyes, whereon the understanding should be exercised, that we might admire the invisible God through His visible works; and being raised to faith and purged by faith, we might desire to behold Him even invisibly, whom invisible we came to know by the things that are visible.¹

Life Thoughts-- Christ in the flesh assures us that God knows how to care for what He creates (John 6:11-12). His Gospel gives sustenance, company, and community along with forgiveness and salvation (Acts 2:42-45). Having such a Father and family nearby can stave off sin and death. *Good Shepherd, let us bring care by being it. Amen.*

Stewardship Thoughts-- John 6:8-9 – “One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, ‘There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?’” The disciples focus on the numbers — so little for so much! But the Lord’s grace will not be limited by the narrow vision of His disciples. The Lord has a plan to use even the little for His work of greatness. So let us be faithful even in the little and watch the Lord use it for His great works!

Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate. Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Apostles’ Creed

Verse: Acts 2:42

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers.”

Read or Chant Psalm 132:8-18

Day	Bible Stories for Daily Devotions	Second Reading
Sun., March 10	Gospel Lesson, 4th Sunday in Lent—John 6:1-15	Exodus 16:2-21
Mon., March 11	All the people came to hear Him—Luke 21:37-22:2	Deuteronomy 9:1-29
Tues., March 12	I will strike the Shepherd—Matthew 26:1-35	Deuteronomy 10:1-22
Wed, March 13	The Son of Man is betrayed—Matthew 26:36-75	Deuteronomy 11:1-32
Thurs, March 14	They...Let Him away to crucify Him—Matthew 27:1-38	Deuteronomy 28:1-14
Fri., March 15	Why have you forsaken Me—Matthew 27:39-56	Deuteronomy 28:15-68
Sat., March 16	She has anointed My body—Mark 14:1-31	Deuteronomy 34:1-12
Sun., March 17	Gospel Lesson, 5 th Sunday in Lent—John 8:46-59	Genesis 22:1-14

¹ Augustine of Hippo. 1888. [“Lectures or Tractates on the Gospel according to St. John.”](#) In *St. Augustin: Homilies on the Gospel of John, Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Soliloquies*, edited by Philip Schaff, translated by John Gibb and James Innes, 7:158. A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series. New York: Christian Literature Company.

Pray the Collect for Laetare (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. Amen.

Personal Prayers and Petitions

Lord's Prayer

Hymn of the Week

Jesus, Priceless Treasure

LSB 743

1 Jesus, priceless treasure,
Fount of purest pleasure,
Truest friend to me,
Ah, how long in anguish
Shall my spirit languish,
Yearning, Lord, for Thee?
Thou art mine,
O Lamb divine!
I will suffer naught to hide Thee;
Naught I ask beside Thee.

3 Satan, I defy thee;
Death, I now decry thee;
Fear, I bid thee cease.
World, thou shalt not harm me
Nor thy threats alarm me
While I sing of peace.
God's great pow'r
Guards ev'ry hour;
Earth and all its depths adore Him,
Silent bow before Him.

4 Hence, all earthly treasure!
Jesus is my pleasure,
Jesus is my choice.
Hence, all empty glory!
Naught to me thy story
Told with tempting voice.
Pain or loss,
Or shame or cross,
Shall not from my Savior move me
Since He deigns to love me.

6 Hence, all fear and sadness!
For the Lord of gladness,
Jesus, enters in.
Those who love the Father,
Though the storms may gather,
Still have peace within.
Yea, whate'er
I here must bear,
Thou art still my purest pleasure,
Jesus, priceless treasure!

Text: Johann Franck, 1618–77; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
Text: Public domain

Looking forward to Passion Sunday (5th Sunday in Lent)

March 24, 2024

Hymns: 547, 439, 430, 634, 431, 550

Genesis 22:1-14

Hebrews 9:11-15

John 8:46-59