

# The Congregation at Prayer

*A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer*

*The Week of Oculi (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent)*

*March 3, 2024, through March 10, 2024*

**Patristic Quote for the Week** —**CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA** (375-444AD): By the finger of God, he means the Holy Spirit. The Son is called the hand and arm of God the Father because he does all things by the Son, and the Son in a similar way works by the Spirit. Just as the finger is attached to the hand as something not foreign from it but belonging to it by nature, so also the Holy Spirit, by reason of his being equal in substance, is joined in oneness to the Son, although he proceeds from God the Father. The Son does every thing by the consubstantial Spirit. Here he purposely says that by the finger of God he casts out devils, speaking as a man. The Jews in the infirmity and folly of their mind would not have endured it if he said, “by my own Spirit I cast out devils.” COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 81.<sup>1</sup>

**Life Thoughts**-- Children of light (Ephesians 5:8) need not hold back a word (Jeremiah 26:2), even when it becomes politically dangerous or elicits cultural hostility (Jeremiah 26:8). Indeed, we find great blessing (Luke 11:28) in lovingly shining the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the haunts of darkness and death. *Light of the World, let us walk and speak Your image as beloved children. Amen.*

**Stewardship Thoughts**-- **Ephesians 5:1–2** – “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.” Our sanctification flows from the justification which we have received in Christ. His love for us transforms us into His image. This is why the Bible talks so much about giving — we are to imitate God in His generosity. If you want to walk in the footsteps of your Heavenly Father, seek mercy, kindness and open-handed generosity.

*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: Psalm 136:1-16**

**“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.”**

*Read or Chant Psalm 4*

**Catechism: Lord’s Prayer—The Introduction “Our Father who art in heaven”**

**What does this mean?** With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

Day	Bible Stories for Daily Devotions	Second Reading
Sun., March 3	<b>Gospel Lesson, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent—Luke 11:14-28</b>	Exodus 8:16-24
Mon., March 4	Receive the kingdom of God like a child—Luke 18:15-30	Numbers 22:2-41
Tues., March 5	To everyone who has—Luke 19:11-27	Numbers 23:1-30
Wed, March 6	Tell us by what authority—Luke 20:1-8	Numbers 24:1-13
Thurs, March 7	Everyone who falls on that Stone—Luke 20:9-18	Numbers 27:12-23
Fri., March 8	Render to Caesar—Luke 20:19-26	Deuteronomy 5:1-33
Sat., March 9	He is not God of the dead—Luke 20:27-38	Deuteronomy 8:1-20
Sun., March 10	<b>Gospel Lesson, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent—John 6:1-15</b>	Exodus 16:2-21

<sup>1</sup> Just, Arthur A., ed. 2005. [Luke](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

**Pray the Collect for Oculi (Third Sunday in Lent):**

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. Amen.

**Personal Prayers and Petitions**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Hymn of the Week**

**Lord of Our Life**

**LSB 659**

- 1 Lord of our life and God of our salvation,  
Star of our night and hope of ev'ry nation:  
Hear and receive Your Church's supplication,  
Lord God Almighty.
- 2 See round Your ark the hungry billows curling;  
See how Your foes their banners are unfurling  
And with great spite their fiery darts are hurling,  
O Lord, preserve us.

- 3 Lord, be our light when worldly darkness veils us;  
Lord, be our shield when earthly armor fails us;  
And in the day when hell itself assails us,  
Grant us Your peace, Lord:
- 4 Peace in our hearts, where sinful thoughts are  
raging,  
Peace in Your Church, our troubled souls  
assuaging,  
Peace when the world its endless war is waging,  
Peace in Your heaven.

Text: Matthäus Apelles von Löwenstern, 1594–1648; tr. Philip Pusey, 1799–1855, alt.  
Text: Public domain

<b><i>Looking forward to Laetare (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent)</i></b>	<b><i>March 10, 2024</i></b>
<b><i>Hymns: 571, 743, (642, 420), 918</i></b>	
<b><i>Exodus 16:2-21</i></b>	
<b><i>Acts 2:41-47</i></b>	
<b><i>John 6:1-15</i></b>	