

## Week of Trinity 1

First recite the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the weekly section of the Small Catechism. Then read the Proper and assigned Scripture reading followed by the devotion. Conclude with singing the hymn of the week.

**Weekly Catechism section:** Confession and the Office of the Keys (Luther's Small Catechism)

**Hymn of the Week:** Lord, Thee I Love With All My Heart (TLH 429)



### Monday - Introit (Psalm 13:5-6, 1-4)

#### Read Psalm 13.

"O Lord, I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation." These first words of this week's *Introit* are the last words of Psalm 13. But before these words David laments that God has hidden his face from him. It has seemed to David that God has forgotten him. Perhaps he wrote this while Saul was trying to kill him (1 Sam 18:8ff). David gives us a great example of lamentation. He laments to God, but before men he refuses to lament about God. In fact, he refuses even to kill Saul when he has the opportunity, because Saul was anointed by God. As he said, "Who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed?" (1 Sam 26:9) Before men David did not complain about God. But before God he lamented. He pours out his heart. He confesses to God that he seems hidden from sight. He complains to God that he has sorrow in his heart and that his enemies are triumphing over him. Such lamentation before God ends with the firm confidence of salvation. He sings, "I will sing to the LORD, for he has dealt bountifully with me."

We therefore learn from our *Introit* how to lament to God. In this prayer, inspired by the Holy Spirit, we see that the believer is in total poverty before God. He does not find his wealth in the things of this world. But his wealth is hidden under all sorts of trials and afflictions. His bounty is found in the salvation, which God has promised him in Christ. This is why David refused to destroy Saul, the Lord's anointed. Because he found his blessing in the coming anointed one, Jesus Christ. He found his blessings in the only begotten Son of God (Ps 2:7) who would suffer for our salvation (Ps. 22). In poverty of soul, mourning our sins and the hopelessness of this world, we learn to bring our lamentations to the only one who can comfort us, the only one who bore in his own body our sins.

We bring our lamentations and complaints to the Lord. He wants to hear them. And he deals bountifully with his children.

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**Tuesday - Old Testament Lesson (Genesis 15:1-6)**

***Read Genesis 15.***

When God promised Abram that he would give him as many descendents as the stars of heaven, he was promising him the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel of Christ takes away our sin, because it sets before us the Lamb of God whose death atoned for the sin of the world. The result of this is much fruit. It is peace not only with God but with a great host of those who are also born of God.

However, Abram wasn't righteous because he fully realized this fruit. He wouldn't see these many descendents in his lifetime. So Moses records that Abram believed the Lord and it was counted to him as righteousness. Faith is what receives God's promises. We have in full God's great promise that the sin, which separates us from God and causes us to hate our brother, has been taken away. We have the full assurance that he will bring in all of his children, purchased by the blood of Christ. We have the full mercy of our God who desires all to be saved by coming to the knowledge of the truth in Christ, the true Offspring of Abraham. Therefore, with Abraham, we have in full God's own righteousness, fulfilled by our Lord Jesus Christ for us. As St. Paul says (1 Cor 1:30), "He has become for us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Since we have all of this in full, we can look forward, with true confidence, to the fruit produced by God's Word. We can even taste it a bit in this life as we walk in the love by which our Lord loved us. This is nothing other than to have confidence before God that what he says about us is actually true, that we are indeed forgiven sinners declared righteous in his sight. Such confidence of faith, acted out in the Christian life, is what the Apostle calls love. And such love casts out the torment of fear plaguing our consciences with doubt. This is because love is grounded on what faith receives in full. Faith is grounded in God's full and free promise. This is why it is acted out in love shared by those who trust in that same promise. They will not be put to shame.

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**Wednesday - Gradual (*Psalm 41:4, 1*)**

***Read Psalm 41.***

"I said, 'LORD, be merciful to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned

against You." These words from our *Gradual* come from Psalm 41. The opening words of this Psalm are: "Blessed is he who considers the poor; the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble." So who is the poor? The poor is the one who needs mercy. God blesses those who consider the poor and helpless. He blesses the mother who changes diapers, the son who cares for his dying father, the Christian who visits a fellow saint who is facing death or poverty. God blesses those who are generous. But why does he do this? He does this because he himself is generous. This is how we learn true generosity. It is by recognizing our own poverty of soul and our need for forgiveness that God would have us learn of his generosity. He forgives our sins and clothes us with the royal robe of Christ who died for us.

If you want to learn what it means to consider the poor, then first consider that you are poor. Consider that your soul is sick and needs healing. Consider that you need God's constant forgiveness and care. Here is true mercy. You don't have to drive far to receive it. Right here in his Sacrament and Word, in the body and blood of Christ, you have healing for your soul. So in the same way you don't have to drive far to show mercy. Right here, in the gathering of the saints, are those who need comfort and encouragement. You are one of them. Your brother or sister next to you is another. We, helpless, sinful creatures, receive help from our Creator who redeemed us by the blood of Christ. So as we receive his help together, he teaches us how we may consider one another. And as the Psalmist sings, "Blessed is he who considers the poor."

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**Thursday - Epistle (1 John 4:16-21)**

***Read 1 John 4.***

If we keep love invisible, then it's up to us to mold it in our own image. This shows how we think about God. Our sinful nature doesn't see God as the one who is to be feared, who reveals himself in his words and works. Instead, the flesh sees God as an invisible concept of authority to give affirmation to what we already think is good. This way, we can conveniently join with the world in whatever it praises as virtuous. We can get the world to think that we are good according to their standards while imagining that we are still honoring God. So foolish Christians give the impression that they support the most godless of movements, which attack God's institution of marriage, the unborn, the church, and the gospel of our Savior. Foolish Christians think that it is loving to

guilt through the death and resurrection of Christ, and they replace it with a counterfeit gospel of worldly balances in political power struggles. Foolish Christians neglect to stand together with their fellow saints so that the world around them will think they are loving. But in trying to get the world to love them, they are only letting their fellow Christians -- their brethren -- hang out to dry. Just as you cannot believe in the Father without believing in the Son who became flesh and blood, and you cannot truly confess our Lord Jesus without acknowledging his testament, "This is my body . . . my blood, etc.," so you cannot love God without loving your brethren, your fellow Christians.

The reason foolish Christians join with unbelievers to promote worldly causes that ignore the will of God is because they fear the world more than God. And those who fear the world can only live in torment, constantly trying to show themselves to be on the right side and to make atonement for whatever guilt the world imputes to them. But the perfect love of God, which made full atonement for your sins in the work of his Son, casts out this worldly fear. So dear Christians, love the brotherhood and fear God. You will not be put to shame.

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### **Friday - Alleluia Verse (Psalm 7:1)**

#### ***Read Psalm 7.***

The *Alleluia verse*, taken from Psalm 7, prepares us for the Gospel lesson by reminding us of the battle in this life. The rich man didn't seem to do anything wrong to poor Lazarus. He didn't actively oppress him. But he had no love for Lazarus. This rich man simply enjoyed his life here on earth while ignoring his brother who could only be comforted by dogs licking his sores. The *Alleluia verse* proclaims: "O LORD my God, in You I put my trust; save me from all those who persecute me, and deliver me." Was Lazarus being persecuted by the rich man? It doesn't seem to be the case. But the rich man certainly didn't care about Lazarus. He let him suffer on his porch. The rich man lived his life in ease, but he didn't stop to consider what his poor brother was going through. Lazarus's poverty was only an outward sign. Of course, he needed mercy for his sores and hunger. But he also simply needed the sympathy of a fellow saint. He needed the support of a fellow believer who cries out to the same God for the same mercy.

If we strive simply to get through life with as much ease as possible, then we will forget about those who suffer, not only in their bodies, but also in

their souls. This is how we become complicit, even if not intending to be, in the persecution of the poor. So Psalm 7 reminds us that this life is not simply a neutral time for us to make the best out of it. God calls us to faith. He invites us to call out for salvation from a world that is hostile to the truth. The rich man had no time to call out for mercy, not until it was too late. From hell he asks for mercy, but all he wants is another taste of the life of ease on his parched tongue. Lazarus was ignored on earth to trust only in the Lord for his salvation. He had no rest in this life, no easy road. So the *Alleluia* verse reminds us to recognize that this present age is not a life for us to get through with as little suffering as possible. It reminds us that we are in constant need for God to save us from those who hate us, to count this life as poverty and strife compared to the immeasurable comfort of the Seed of Abraham. This Seed is Christ. He is our comfort and our salvation.

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### **Saturday - Gospel (Luke 16:19-31)**

#### ***Read Luke 16.***

He was rich, but that isn't why he went to hell when he died. He went to hell because his treasure was in his material wealth. Abraham reminded him, "In your lifetime you received good things." This word for "receive" is used to describe receiving your due reward. Paul (Gal 4:4-5) says that Jesus was born under the law to redeem us who are under the law "that we might *receive* the adoption as sons." The thief to Jesus' right accurately confessed that he was *receiving* the just reward for his sin by being condemned to death. Unlike Abraham (Gen 15:1) and Lazarus, the rich man claimed his wealth as his great reward. But Lazarus claimed nothing in his own life. The rich man's heart was rich in his possessions. Lazarus' heart was poor. The rich man loved his life at the expense of his neighbor and ultimately of his own soul. Lazarus put no stock in his life and therefore found it in the bosom of Abraham, that is, in the Seed of Abraham -- Jesus Christ.

So who are you, Lazarus or the rich man? Or are you one of his five brothers? He was convinced that if they saw someone risen from the dead then they would surely believe. Do you need to hear stories of some child who went to heaven and back in order to have confidence in your salvation? Or maybe you just need a hip, energetic pastor who can relate to the youth and talk to you about your interests. Do you need God's Word to be spiced up for your entertainment? We might think we need all kinds of things. But, as Abraham rightly says, we have Moses and the Prophets. We have the Apostles. They don't bear witness to our hobbies

or favorite TV shows. They bear witness to the poverty of our sin and our just reward of condemnation. And they teach us to find our treasure in the poverty of Christ who suffered in weakness to save us from sin, death, and hell. So despite what the world and our own sinful flesh lust after, our treasure remains in the Seed of Abraham in whom you and your family are blessed.

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## 429

## Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart

Ps. 18

Herzlich Lieb hab' ich dich, o Herr

Martin Schalling, c. 1567

Tr., Catherine Winkworth, 1868, alt.

8. 8. 7. 8. 8. 7. 8. 8. 8. 4. 8. 8.

Herzlich Lieb hab' ich dich, o Herr

Bernhard Schmid's "Orgelbuch"

Strassburg, 1577

1 Lord, Thee I love with all my heart; I pray Thee, ne'er from  
 2 Yea, Lord, 'twas Thy rich boun-ty gave My bod - y, soul, and  
 3 Lord, let at last Thine an - gels come, To A-bram's bos-om

me de - part, With ten - der mer - cy cheer me.  
 all I have In this poor life of la - - bor.  
 bear me home, That I may die un - fear - - ing;

Earth has no plea-sure I would share, Yea, heav'n it - self were  
 Lord, grant that I in ev - 'ry place May glo - ri - fy Thy  
 And in its nar-row cham-ber keep My bod - y safe in

void and bare If Thou, Lord, wert not near me.  
 lav - ish grace And serve and help my neigh - bor.  
 peace-ful sleep Un - til Thy re - ap - pear - - ing.

Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart

And should my heart for sor - row break, My trust in  
 Let no false doc - trine me be - guile, Let Sa - tan  
 And then from death a - wak - en me That these mine

Thee no one could shake. Thou art the Por - tion  
 not my soul de - file. Give strength and pa - tience  
 eyes with joy may see, O Son of God, Thy

I have sought; Thy pre - cious blood my soul has bought.  
 un - to me To bear my cross and fol - low Thee.  
 glo - rious face, My Sav - ior and my Fount of grace.

Lord Je - sus Christ, My God and Lord, my God and Lord,  
 Lord Je - sus Christ, My God and Lord, my God and Lord,  
 Lord Je - sus Christ, My prayer at - tend, my prayer at - tend,

For - sake me not! I trust Thy Word.  
 In death Thy com - fort still af - ford.  
 And I will praise Thee with - out end. A - men.