

## Week of Trinity 7

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:** Second Commandment (Luther's Small Catechism)

**Hymn of the Week:** Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Living Bread (TLH 312)

### Monday - Introit (Psalm 47:1-3, 6-8)

#### Read Psalm 47.

We don't usually stop and think about how awesome our God and Savior is when we sit down to eat. Hopefully we give thanks and ask God to bless our food. We ask Jesus to be our guest. We give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endures forever. This Sunday we consider how God provides for our bodily needs. We hear from Genesis 2 how God provided everything for Adam and his wife. We hear in Mark 8 that Jesus fed four thousand with only seven loaves of bread and a few small fish. God provides. We pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," and we thereby ask that God would lead to us to realize that he provides for all people, good or bad, so that we might receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

But what are we really confessing when we say that God provides for us? We are confessing his exaltation over all the earth, just as our *Introit* and our *Alleluia verse* say, taken from Psalm 47: "The Lord Most High is awesome. He is a great king over all the earth." This is a prophesy of Jesus, the eternal Son of the Father, God of God, who ascended on high after his saving death on the cross. This is something to consider. When we eat our meals, put on our clothes, drink our water, and we recognize that this is all provided by our Father in heaven, we are confessing our Lord's exaltation. We are confessing that Christ has ascended on high going up with a shout, the shout of the trumpet of triumph (Ps. 47:5). This is none other than the shout of the gospel. Therefore we learn that even when we are doing our menial work, eating ordinary food, and visiting with ordinary people, we can enjoy these things because Christ, our eternal Lord, reigns. And we can enjoy these things with

thanksgiving and joy because we know that the same Lord who provides them is the Lord who took away our only reason to be sad. He took away our sins, and he stands on his throne interceding for us, satisfying us with his Word of life, even as he satisfies our bodies with bread.

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## **Tuesday - Old Testament Lesson (Genesis 2:7-17)**

### ***Read Genesis 2.***

God formed man out of the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. The land he prepared for Adam in and around Eden was beautiful. The river, which went out of Eden to water the garden, divided into four rivers in beautiful lands with gold and precious stones. Some of these places and rivers bear the same names as those existing after the flood, but the latter are only imitations of the former. This world was perfect, completely untouched of sin and corruption. So God put the man in this world to work.

Such work was not burdensome. He worked the land out of which he was taken. But he was no longer dust and clay. He was given the very breath of God. He was created in God's image and likeness. He worked, but it was as one who was free, not worrying about whether his work would pay off or not. He did his duty with joy, without any burden in his conscience. Of course, this all changed after the man and his wife fell into sin. They ate of the tree God commanded Adam not to eat of. They lost God's image. They became dust again, the very dust from which they were taken. But before the fall we see a picture of God's true intention for man. It was to live under him in joy and freedom. Such a life was restored to us in the second Adam, Jesus Christ. He gave his blood, more precious than gold, bdellium, onyx stone, or any other precious elements. He took away our sins and restored to us the likeness of God's countenance. He opens up our eyes so that we may see that God provides for us in both body and soul.

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## **Wednesday - Gradual (Psalm 34:11, 5)**

### ***Read Psalm 34.***

Christ, our compassionate Lord, satisfies us with every good. Psalm 34 says that those who fear the Lord lack nothing good. Our *Gradual* comes from this same Psalm, which says, "Come, O children, listen to me, and I

will teach you the fear of the LORD." It continues with these words from earlier in the Psalm, "They looked to him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed." How can one satisfy so many people with bread out in the wilderness? This is what the disciples asked Jesus. They were satisfied by the compassion of Christ, which prompted him to perform a miracle that defies the highest and most praised intellect among men. Right before their eyes he multiplied seven loaves and three small fish to four thousand people. This is what our Lord's compassion does. To look to him in every need is what it means to fear him. This is the beginning of wisdom. It is to turn to Jesus and his compassion and not be put to shame.

Psalm 34 is what David sang after he escaped from the Philistine king. David was running away from Saul, and he found himself hiding in the camp of the Philistines, the mortal enemies of Israel. David was the one who had killed thousands of Philistines, not to mention their great hero, the giant Goliath. David acted insane in front of Achish, the Philistine king. So he let David go, figuring that it was useless to capture him (1 Sam 21:10-15). David was in a desperate and frankly pathetic state, so much that he had to revert to acting like a mad man in order to save his life. But in such foolishness, David was relying on the Lord. He was fearing God and not men. When we fear God we often look foolish to those who insist that we should always rely on our wit and speed. Those who value money and stuff turn all arts into tools to gain more money and stuff. And having gained this education, they imagine they are very wise. But someone like David is a fool. Those who follow Jesus out into the wilderness are fools. Well, the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Those who look to Christ and his saving death -- those who hold onto his compassion -- are radiant and not ashamed, even if they look like fools to this dying world.

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#### **Thursday - Epistle (*Romans 6:19-23*)**

##### ***Read Romans 6.***

People think they are free when they do whatever their sinful impulses desire. When they get drunk, fornicate, go to churches that tell them what they like to hear, and go along with whatever the culture says only to be accepted, they think that this is freedom. St. Paul calls this slavery. Sure, it is freedom from righteousness. But that is no freedom at all.

They imagine that their bodily needs simply come to them either by chance or because they are somehow entitled to them. They take for granted that they can live, eat, drink, and be merry without having to acknowledge the fact that they do not in any way deserve these blessings. This is how we are by nature. God gives us our daily bread, but instead of seeking his favor in Christ, the sinful human nature seeks the favor of the world. It seeks pleasure in what it what gratifies its own self-serving desires. But this is not liberty. This is bondage.

True freedom is freedom in Christ. It is hearing and believing his Word. It is thinking like he thinks, seeking not your own needs, but those of your neighbors, because you know that your own needs are satisfied by God. You know that he will provide for you, even if you must suffer in this life. We learn this from our Gospel lesson as well. The people following Jesus, listening to his Word, didn't need to worry about food. Yes, we work. We put in our hours of labor, bringing home the pay check or managing the house. But all the while it is God who is providing us with our daily bread, freely because of his own fatherly goodness and with no merit or worthiness in us. To know this is true freedom. To know that God gives all good things, and to expect from him all good things is what it means to be free in Christ. And we can know this and be confident in this, because Christ has freed us from the tyranny of our former master. By dying for us he has freed us from our sins, so that in our baptism we are dead to sin and alive to God. The pleasures of this life go away, and they leave us in slavery if we depend on them. But our freedom in Christ never perishes.

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### **Friday - Alleluia Verse (Psalm 47:1)**

#### ***Read Psalm 47.***

"Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!" We sing this first verse from Psalm 47 in our *Introit*. We sing it again in our *Alleluia*. What makes this significant to this week of Trinity 7 is that the Psalm is addressing all *peoples*. Mark 8 describes the feeding of the four thousand. On *Laetare*, the fourth Sunday in Lent, we hear from John 6 about the feeding of the five thousand. Why do we consider both of these accounts each year in our historic lectionary? What is so significant about the feeding of the four thousand? It is that Jesus is feeding gentiles. He is feeding the peoples from nations other than

Israel. He was skirting the area around the Sea of Galilee, just as Isaiah 9 foretells:

The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,  
And afterward more heavily oppressed her,  
By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,  
In Galilee of the Gentiles.  
The people who walked in darkness  
Have seen a great light;  
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,  
Upon them a light has shined.

When Jesus multiplies seven loafs and a few small fish to feed this multitude of a different people than his own. This is because he is the God and Savior of the nations. So clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!

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### **Saturday - Gospel (Mark 8:1-9)**

#### ***Read Mark 8.***

There are about 4,000 hungry people, and Jesus asks his disciples how many loaves of bread they have. It's as if he were saying, "Look at all of these people. There is no way anyone can have enough bread to feed them." He is teaching us that our little contribution isn't nearly enough, but only his grace and merit abound. The point of this account is not that we give a little, and then God finishes it. No, he's the one who provided the bread and fish in the first place. We can contribute nothing. Only he can take such a small amount and use it to sustain his creation.

Jesus also teaches us that he works through means. God doesn't just zap our hunger and thirst away. No, he provides us with daily bread. He gives us parents, a spouse, good government, a healthy market, and the like. And yet all of these things are very unworthy instruments of God's care. No father is worthy of the children God gives him. Spouses don't always treat each other with love and respect. Governments are often corrupt and incompetent, and the market often has its low moments. Yet, through these unworthy instruments, God still provides for his creation. And Jesus teaches us that even if we only appear to have seven loaves and a few fish, our sustenance is not in the food but rather in the one who provides the food. As we pray before our meals, "The eyes of all look to Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. (Ps.

145:15)" And the Psalm goes on, "The Lord is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear him; he also will hear their cry and save them. (145:18-19)" Jesus teaches us to find satisfaction for all of our needs in our heavenly Father's mercy. He who is at the bosom of the Father from eternity (John 1:18) reveals the heart of God who gives his own Son into death in order to rescue us from sin and claim us as his children. So as God feeds us, his children, he also comforts us. Whether we are hungry, facing poverty or debt, or mourning over a guilty conscience, Jesus teaches us to find in him all we need for this life as well as for the life to come.

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## Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Living Bread

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John 6: 48

Du Lebensbrot, Herr Jesu Christ

Johann Rist, 1654, cento

Tr., Arthur T. Russell, 1851, alt.

8. 7. 8. 7. 8. 8. 7.

Herr, wie du willst

"Deutsch Kirchenamt"

Strassburg, 1525



1 Lord Je-sus Christ, Thou living Bread, May I for mine pos-sess Thee.  
 2 Thou me to pas-tures green dost guide, To qui-et wa-ters lead me;  
 3 O Bread of Heav'n, my soul's De-light, For full and free re-mis-sion  
 4 I mer-it not Thy fa-vor, Lord, Sin now up-on me li-eth;




I would with heav'n-ly food be fed; De-scend, re-fresh, and bless me.  
 Thy Ta-ble Thou dost well pro-vide And from Thy hand dost feed me.  
 With prayer I come be-fore Thy sight, In sor-row and con-tri-tion.  
 Be-neath my bur-den, self-ab-horred, To Thee my spir-it cri-eth.




Now make me meet for Thee, O Lord; Now, hum-bly by my heart im-plied,  
 Sin, weakness, and in-fir-mi-ty. Am I; O Sav-ior, give to me  
 With faith a-dorn my soul that I May to Thy Ta-ble now draw nigh  
 In all my grief this com-forts me, That Thou on sin-ners gra-cious-ly,




Grant me Thy grace and mer - - cy.  
 The cup of Thy sal - va - - tion.  
 With Thine own prep - a - ra - - tion.  
 Lord Je - sus; hast com - pas - - sion. A - men.

