

*For the week of the Nativity of Our Lord  
December 25<sup>th</sup>, through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022*

**Catechesis Notes for the Week — “Bodily Interaction with Jesus”** Merry Christmas! This week we celebrate the incarnation and birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ! Our whole faith revolves around Jesus coming in human flesh. We know the story well: the angels proclaimed; Mary conceived and gave birth; Jesus grew, taught, performed miracles, suffered, died, rose again, and ascended. Yet sometimes it just seems a story. The life of Jesus seems so distant that we tend to forget the importance of the incarnation upon our life and faith today. Sure, He came to die on the cross. This is true. But then He ascended and is no longer bodily here with us. Or is He? This is the trouble when we don’t understand what the Scriptures teach about Jesus’ presence here with us.

Though Jesus walked the earth 2,000 years ago that doesn’t mean we are far removed from the bodily life of Jesus. In fact, it is through the bodily life of Jesus, especially in His ascension, that He is still found today. But His bodily presence is hidden from human eyes. He can only be seen with the eyes of faith. Though this is not in some “spiritual” sense that is detached from physical, concrete reality. The church has been tempted throughout history to disassociate Jesus’ spirit from His body, but this isn’t just a minor error. It causes serious problems. Jesus is alive! He is living! Death separates body and soul but as a living being Jesus is both body and spirit.

We are tempted to “free” Jesus from His body because then that “frees” us to do what we like. We are able to spiritualize the faith to take the parts we like and leave what’s left. However, as both God and man Christ continues to interact with us bodily. His presence among us is still incarnational, a concrete reality. And He tells us where we are able go to receive and interact bodily with Him, and it is that bodily interaction that feeds our faith.

The place is the Church. Now, this isn’t just any group of people who claim the name of Jesus, but the Church is are those who are made to be members of Christ through His Word. His Word itself is a physical reality. Don’t forget, He IS the Word incarnate. God created all things through Jesus, His Word, by speaking it into existence. The Word is physical and weighty. That is why we do well to heed it. Also, it is impossible to know Jesus, to see Jesus, to receive Jesus apart from it. We may have “experiences” in which we claim to know, see, or feel Jesus, but nowhere in His Word does Jesus say we receive Him through these means. Instead, He tells us exactly where we receive Him: in His Word.

And it is His Word that transforms ordinary things into heavenly things. It is His Word that plunders the kingdom of darkness to bring us out, it is His Word that sanctifies, and it is His Word that is combined with water, bread, and wine to unite us to Himself. Jesus is with us bodily, our incarnate Lord, and desires us to be with Him in the place where He is found.

### ***The Order of Meditation and Prayer***

*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: 1 PETER 3:18**

*For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.*

**PSALM 2 or the appointed daily psalms**

**Prayer on the Psalm**

*Thanks be unto You, O Lord Jesus Christ, because You were once dead, and by Your blood redeemed us from sin and everlasting torment. We desire to serve You all the days of our life. Preserve us in the midst of so many enemies, and by Your mighty hand preserve us for Your eternal kingdom! Amen.*

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	42, 43	45	48	50	52, 53	54, 56	59	62, 63
Evening	44	46, 47	49	51	55	57, 58	60, 61	64, 65

**BIBLE READINGS**

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-18	
Monday	Circumcision, Purification of Mary, and Presentation—Luke 2:8-14	John 15:1-17
Tuesday	Simeon and Anna Receive the Christ-Child—Luke 2:25-40	John 15:18-16:11
Wednesday	The Epiphany of Our Lord—Matthew 2:13-15	John 16:12-33
Thursday	The Flight into Egypt—Matthew 2:13-15	John 17:1-26
Friday	The Slaughter of the Holy Innocence—Matthew 2:16-23	John 18:1-18
Saturday	Isaiah 63:7-14	Galatians 4:4-7

**CATECHISM — The Sacrament of Holy Baptism**

<i>How can water do such great things?</i>	Third Grade+
Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water. For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three:	Third Grade+
<i>He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying.</i>	Preschool+

**DEVOTION OR MEDITATION**

**DAILY PRAYER**

Select from among the following prayers as time and circumstances allow:

**Prayer on the Sacrament of Holy Baptism**

*O God our Father, You have saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal, which You have poured out on us in our Baptism into Your Son. We thank You for this life-giving water, rich in grace by Your trustworthy promise. Give us faith always to trust Your Word in the water that, justified by grace, we remain heirs of eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.*

## **Collect of the Week**

*Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

## **Daily Themes for Prayer**

- Sunday: For the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacrament.*
- Monday: For faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.*
- Tuesday: For deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with sin.*
- Wednesday: For marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.*
- Thursday: For the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood.*
- Friday: For the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.*
- Saturday: For faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.*

## **In Our Prayers this Week**

**Our Congregation:** *Kermit & Cheryl Deterding; John Deterding; Brandon Dewey; Richard & Christine Dewey; Dillon Dewey, Remington, Finnley, Laykn, Chasidy; Christal Dewey; David & Lynn Dunn*

**Baptismal Birthdays:** *Hannah Leadbetter; Kevin Leadbetter; Finnley Dewey; Anita Williams; Alvin Dehn; Caitlin Sonnich*

**Wedding Anniversaries:** *Michael & Debra Carey*

**The Sick:**

**Friends of our Congregation:**

**Our Circuit:**

*St. John Lutheran Church, Aliceville; Rev. Timothy Booth  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Burlington; Rev. Don Haselhuhn*

**Our District Staff and President,** *Rev. Justin Panzer.*

*Tami Lierz, Administrative Assistant  
Jeffrey Maltz, LCED*

**Our Synod and President,** *Rev. Matthew Harrison*

**Our Community:** *City of Pomona; City of Williamsburg; USD 287*

**Our State and Governor,** *Laura Kelly*

**Our Nation and President,** *Joseph Biden*

## LORD'S PRAYER

### MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER FROM THE CATECHISM

*I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.*

—or—

*I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.*

### HYMN OF THE WEEK

### "O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is"

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| <p>1 O Jesus Christ, Thy manger is My paradise at which my soul reclineth. For there, O Lord, Doth lie the Word Made flesh for us; herein Thy grace forth shineth.</p> <p>2 He whom the sea And wind obey Doth come to serve the sinner in great meekness. Thou, God's own Son, With us art one, Dost join us and our children in our weakness.</p> <p>3 Thy light and grace Our guilt efface, Thy heav'nly riches all our loss retrieving. Immanuel, Thy birth doth quell The pow'r of hell and Satan's bold deceiving.</p> | <p>4 Thou Christian heart, Whoe'er thou art, Be of good cheer and let no sorrow move thee! For God's own Child, In mercy mild, Joins thee to Him; how greatly God must love thee!</p> <p>5 Remember thou What glory now The Lord prepared thee for all earthly sadness. The angel host Can never boast Of greater glory, greater bliss or gladness.</p> <p>6 The world may hold Her wealth and gold; But thou, my heart, keep Christ as thy true treasure. To Him hold fast Until at last A crown be thine and honor in full measure.</p> |
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Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-76; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941  
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### Looking Forward to "First Sunday After Christmas"

January 1 2023

**Service Hymns:** Praise Team

**Readings:** Isaiah 63:7-14 | Galatians 4:4-7 | Matthew 2:13-23

Herod's efforts to destroy the little Lord Jesus anticipate the cross for which He was born. In response to Herod's edict, Joseph must "take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt" (Matt. 2:13). But the Lord does not abandon the Holy Family there. He brings about salvation for all people, just as He "had spoken by the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I called my son'" (Matt. 2:15). With might and strength, God accompanies His people, causing "his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses" (Is. 63:12). Now through Jesus, even our afflictions are borne by Christ on the cross. "He redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them" (Is. 63:9). All of this is accomplished by God's might so that we, too, are claimed as members of His family. For we "receive adoption as sons" in the only begotten Son, Christ Jesus, even as He became like us by His conception and birth of the woman. Thus redeemed by Christ, no longer slaves of sin and death but beloved children and heirs of God, we pray in Jesus' name: "Abba! Father!" (Gal. 4:4-6).

