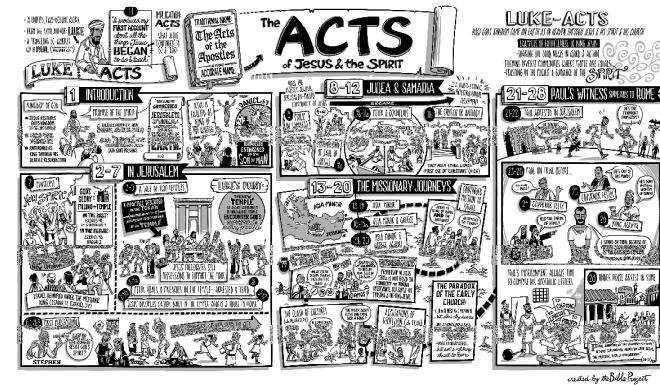


Prayer
Requests



The Congregation at Prayer
The Whole Story

2025
A Daily Devotional
St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA



Week #17-The Whole Story

Week of Easter

April 20-April 27, 2025

Start Every Day

*“In the Name of the Father, and + of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit. Amen”*

recite **APOSTLE’S CREED**

*Read Catechism—The Ninth Commandment
You shall not covet your neighbor’s house.*

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be service to him in keeping it.

VERSE: Matthew 28:19-20 ***“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”***

PRAYER of the WORD

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, without Your help our labor is useless, and without Your light our search is in vain. Invigorate our study of Your holy Word that, by due diligence and right discernment, we may establish ourselves and others in Your holy faith; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 20 (Easter Sunday)

- Read **The Gospels: John 20-21**

HESYCHIUS OF JERUSALEM: (John 20:1) Hidden first in a womb of flesh, he sanctified human birth by his own birth. Hidden afterward in the womb of the earth, he gave life to the dead by his resurrection. Suffering, pain and sighs have now fled away. For who has known the mind of God, or who has been his counselor if not the Word made flesh who was nailed to the cross, who rose from the dead and who was taken up into heaven? This day brings a message of joy: it is the day of the Lord's resurrection when, with himself, he raised up the

He died on the accursèd tree—
So strong His love—to save us.
See, His blood now marks our door;
Faith points to it; death passes o'er,
And Satan cannot harm us.
Alleluia!

- 6 So let us keep the festival
To which the Lord invites us;
Christ is Himself the joy of all,
The sun that warms and lights us.
Now His grace to us imparts
Eternal sunshine to our hearts;
The night of sin is ended.
Alleluia!
- 7 Then let us feast this Easter Day
On Christ, the bread of heaven;
The Word of grace has purged away
The old and evil leaven.
Christ alone our souls will feed;
He is our meat and drink indeed;
Faith lives upon no other!
Alleluia!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Richard Massie, 1800–87, alt.
Text: Public domain

458 CHRIST JESUS LAY IN DEATH'S STRONG BANDS

- 1 Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands
For our offenses given;
But now at God's right hand He stands
And brings us life from heaven.
Therefore let us joyful be
And sing to God right thankfully
Loud songs of alleluia!
Alleluia!
- 2 No son of man could conquer death,
Such ruin sin had wrought us.
No innocence was found on earth,
And therefore death had brought us
Into bondage from of old
And ever grew more strong and bold
And held us as its captive.
Alleluia!
- 3 Christ Jesus, God's own Son, came down,
His people to deliver;
Destroying sin, He took the crown
From death's pale brow forever:
Stripped of pow'r, no more it reigns;
An empty form alone remains;
Its sting is lost forever.
Alleluia!
- 4 It was a strange and dreadful strife
When life and death contended;
The victory remained with life,
The reign of death was ended.
Holy Scripture plainly saith
That death is swallowed up by death,
Its sting is lost forever.
Alleluia!
- 5 Here our true Paschal Lamb we see,
Whom God so freely gave us;

race of Adam. Born for the sake of human beings, he rose from the dead with them. On this day paradise is opened by the risen one, Adam is restored to life and Eve is consoled. On this day the divine call is heard, the kingdom is prepared, we are saved and Christ is adored. On this day, when he had trampled death under foot, made the tyrant a prisoner and despoiled the underworld, Christ ascended into heaven as a king in victory, as a ruler in glory, as an invincible charioteer. He said to the Father, "Here am I, O God, with the children you have given me." And he heard the Father's reply, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." To him be glory, now and for ever, through endless ages. Amen. EASTER HOMILY 5–6.¹

Monday, April 21

- Read **Psalm 107** (O Give thanks to YHWH, for he is good)
- Read ***Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 1-2***

CHRYSOSTOM: (Acts 1:8) And they did become witnesses by their miracles. This is so, for the grace of the Spirit is ineffable, and innumerable are his gifts. Moreover, this took place that you might learn that the gifts and the power of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit are one. What appears to be proper to the Father also belongs in

¹ Elowsky, Joel C., ed. 2007. [John 11–21](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

reality to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. “How is it, then,” you will say, “that no one comes to the Son ‘unless the Father draw him’?” But this is shown to be true of the Son also, for he said, “I am the way; no one comes to the Father but through me.”¹⁹ And notice that the same thing is true of the Spirit also. For “No one can say, ‘Jesus Christ is Lord,’ except in the Holy Spirit.” And again, we are told that apostles have been given to the church, at one time by the Father, at another by the Son, and at another by the Holy Spirit, so we see that the varieties of gifts belong to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. HOMILIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 86.²

Tuesday, April 22

- Read **Psalm 108** (My heart is steadfast, O God!)
- Read **Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 3-4**

CHRYSOSTOM: (Acts 3:6) Let no one then be humiliated on account of his poverty: It is not poverty that humiliates, but wealth, which compels us to have need of many and forces us to be under obligations to many.... So, if poverty had made people wanting in boldness, Christ would not have sent his disciples with poverty to a work requiring great boldness. For the poor person is very strong

² Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

pray **LORD’S PRAYER**

Luther’s Morning Prayer

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.

Luther’s Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. 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.

multitude becomes powerful when virtue is present. And it had such a power that even though the doors were closed, chains bound the apostle and the jailers slept at both his sides, virtue delivered him and saved him from all those difficulties. So if virtue is present the multitude has great strength, but if vice is present it makes no benefit. CATENA ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 12.6–7.⁷

Sunday, April 27

- Read **Psalm 113** (Hallelujah! Praise, O servants of YHWH, praise the name of YHWH!)
- Read **Acts of the Apostles, Ch. 13-14**

End Every Day

Pray the *Collect for Easter Sunday*

Almighty God the Father, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have overcome death and opened the gate of everlasting life to us. Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of our Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by Your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Personal Prayers

⁷ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

and has nothing of which he may be wronged or evil to be prayed for. But the rich person is assailable on every side: just in the same way as one would easily catch a person who was dragging many long ropes after him, whereas one could not readily lay hold on a naked person. So here also it does not succeed in the case of the rich person: slaves, gold, lands, affairs innumerable, innumerable cares, difficult circumstances, necessities, make him an easy prey to all. ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS 18.4.³

Wednesday, April 23

- Read **Psalm 109** (Be not silent, O God of my praise!)
 - Read **Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 5-6**
- POLYCARP OF SMYRNA:** (Acts 5:41) Let us then continually persevere in our hope and the earnest of our righteousness, which is Jesus Christ, “who bore our sins in his own body on the tree,” “who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,” but who endured all things for us, that we might live in him. Let us then be imitators of his patience; and if we suffer for his name's sake, let us glorify him. For he has set us this example in himself, and

³ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

we have believed that such is the case. LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS 8.⁴

Thursday, April 24

- Read **Psalm 110** (YHWH says to my Lord: Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.)
- Read **Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 7-8**

BEDE: (Acts 7:58) The Lord too, who “chose” us “out of the world” for his heavenly kingdom and glory, suffered outside the gate, like Stephen, who, as though he were a stranger to the world, was stoned outside the city. For he had no permanent city here, but with his whole heart he sought the city to come. And, in accordance with the vicissitudes of events, the martyr directed the gaze of his pure heart to heaven, while the stiff-necked persecutor stretched out his hands toward the stones. **COMMENTARY ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 7.58.**⁵

Friday, April 25

- Read **Psalm 111** (Hallelujah! I will give thanks to YHWH with my whole heart)

⁴ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁵ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

- Read **Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 9-10**
CHRYSOSTOM: (Acts 9:9) “And for three days neither did he eat nor drink, being blinded.” What could equal this? To compensate the discouragement in the matter of Stephen, here is encouragement, in the bringing in of Paul. Though that sadness had its consolation in the fact of Stephen’s making such an end, yet it also received this further consolation. Moreover, the bringing in of the villages of the Samaritans afforded very great comfort. But why did this take place not at the very first but after these things? That it might be shown that Christ was indeed risen. This furious assailant of Christ, the man who would not believe in his death and resurrection, the persecutor of his disciples, how should this man have become a believer, had not the power of his resurrection been great indeed? **HOMILIES ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 19.**⁶

Saturday, April 26

- Read **Psalm 112** (Hallelujah! Blessed is the man who fears YHWH)
- Read **Acts of the Apostles, Ch. 11-12**

CHRYSOSTOM: (Acts 12:6) See how Peter slept and was not in anguish or fear. In the very night when he was about to be brought before the court he slept, leaving everything to God. Indeed the

⁶ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.