

Ember Days

“The material in the Large Catechism originated as sermons by Martin Luther on the basic texts of Christian teaching. Already in the Middle Ages, some regional synods in Germany had called for regular preaching on the “catechism” (usually defined as the Ten Commandment, Apostles’ Creed, Lord’s Prayer and, sometimes, the Ave Maria). The Ember Days, four time of fasting spread throughout the church year {*The Wednesday, Friday and Saturday after 1st Sunday in Lent, Pentecost, Holy Cross Day(Sep 14), and St. Lucia’s Day(Dec 13)*}, were often designated for this purpose. Even before the Reformation, Wittenberg’s city church, St. Mary’s also seems to have followed this practice. Luther himself preached on various portions of the catechism as early as 1518” (*The Book of Concord*, Kolb, preface to Large Catechism, p.377)

“Up to the eleventh century the Ember days of spring were kept in the first week of March; and those of summer, in the second week of June. It was St. Gregory VII. Who fixed them as we now have them; that is, the Ember days of spring in the first week of Lent, and those of Summer in Whitsunday week.” (*The Liturgical Year, Vol 5, p.156*).

Collects

Ember Wednesday.—O Lord, we pray thee, to aid our infirmities with the healing of Thy loving-kindness: that we, which are made weak by the frailty of our nature, may be strengthened by the power of Thy mercy; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost: ever one God, world without end. **AMEN.**

Ember Friday.—Grant we beseech Thee, Almighty God: that we, who put our trust in Thee, may serve Thee acceptably both in body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost: ever one God, world without end. **AMEN.**

Ember Saturday.—Almighty and everlasting God, who dost command bodily discipline and hast attached promises thereto: grant that we may constantly serve Thee in soul and body, that no temptation may cause us to stumble; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost: ever one God, world without end. **AMEN.**

1 Luther himself wrote six hymns based on the parts of the Catechism.
2 See first Paragraph above.

Small Catechism

“Thus we have, in all, five parts covering the whole of Christian doctrine, which we should constantly teach and require young people to recite word for word. Do not assume that they will learn and retain this teaching from sermons alone. ²⁵When these parts have been well learned, you may assign them also some Psalms and some hymns, ¹ based on these subjects, to supplement and confirm their knowledge. Thus our youth will be led into the Scriptures so they make progress daily.

²⁶However, it is not enough for them simply to learn and repeat these parts verbatim. The young people should also attend preaching, especially at the time designated for the Catechism, ² so that they may hear it explained and may learn the meaning of every part. Then they will also be able to repeat what they have heard and give a good, correct answer when they are questioned, and thus the preaching will not be without benefit and fruit. ²⁷The reason we take such care to preach on the Catechism frequently is to impress it upon our youth, not in a lofty and learned manner but briefly and very simply, so that it may penetrate deeply into their minds and remain fixed in their memories.³

Catechism Schedule

Advent: Wednesday: 1st-3rd Commandments
Friday: 4th-10th Commandments
Saturday: Conclusion
Lent: Wednesday: 1st Article of the Creed
Friday: 2nd Article of the Creed
Saturday: 3rd Article of the Creed
Pentecost: Wednesday: Lord’s Prayer (through 4th Petition)
Friday: Lord’s Prayer (5th Petition through “Amen”)
Saturday: Baptism
September: Wednesday: Confession
Friday: The Lord’s Supper
Saturday: Morning & Evening Prayer, Table Prayer, Table of Duties

3 Preface of 1529, Large Catechism, (Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia).

The Order of Matins, p. 208

+ Hymn	#488
+ “O Lord, open my lips...	p.208f
+ <u>Ascription of Praise</u>	p.209
“Praise to you, O Christ, Alleluia”	
+ <u>Pentecost Invitatory</u>	p.209
P. “The Lord has sanctified us	
in the true faith.”	
C. Oh, come, let us worship him.	
+ <u>The Venite</u>	p.209f
“Oh, come, let us sing...”	
+ Office HYMN.....	#234
<u>Psalmody</u>	
Psalm 1	(insert)
Psalm 33	(insert)
Psalm 16	(insert)
<u>Reading</u>	
Wed – Amos 9:13-15, Mark 9:16-28	
Fri – Hosea 14:2-10, Luke 7:36-50	
Sat – Leviticus 23:26-32, Hebrews 9:2-	
12, Luke 13:6-17	
Common Responsory	p.211
“Forever, O Lord, your Word...”	
<u>Catechism Reading</u>	
Wed – Confession, Office...Keys (p.304)	
Fri – Lord’s Supper (p.305)	
Sat – Prayer (p.305-306), Table of Duties	
Sermon	
Offering	
+ Te Deum.....	p.214-217
“Blessed be the Lord God...”	
+ The Prayers.....	p.219
Kyrie (“Lord, have mercy...”)	
Lord’s Prayer	
Salutation	
Collect of the Day	(inside)
Special Prayers	
Collect for Grace	
+ Benedicamus	p.222

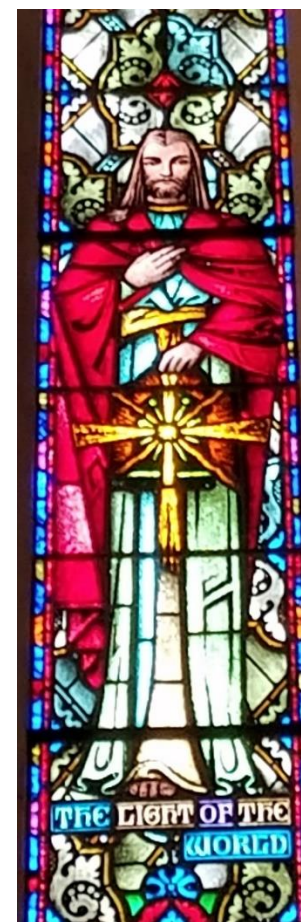
Fighting the Sinful Nature

By Dr. Martin Luther

No one should be surprised or frightened when he feels this conflict of the flesh against the Spirit in his body, but he should fortify himself with these words of Paul: “The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit” and “These are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would.” With these statements he is comforting those who are undergoing trials, as though he were saying: “It is impossible for you to follow the Spirit as your guide through everything without some awareness of hindrance by the flesh. Your flesh will be an obstacle, the sort of obstacle that will prevent you from doing what you would. Here it is sufficient if you resist the flesh and do not gratify its desires, that is, if you follow the Spirit rather than the flesh, which is easily disturbed by impatience, which seeks revenge, grumbles, hates, bites back, etc.” When someone becomes aware of this battle of the flesh, he should not lose heart on this account; but by the Spirit he should fight back and say: “I am a sinner, and I am aware of my sin; for I have not yet put off my flesh, to which sin will cling as long as it lives. But I will obey the Spirit rather than the flesh. That is, by faith and hope I will take hold of Christ. I will fortify myself with His Word, and thus fortified I will refuse to gratify the desires of the flesh.”

It is very useful to the faithful to know this doctrine of Paul well and to meditate on it, because it gives wonderful comfort to them in their trial. When I was a monk, I used to think that my salvation was undone when I felt any desires of the flesh, that is, any malice or sexual desire or anger or envy against any of my brothers. I tried many methods. I made confession every day, etc. But none of this did any good, because the desires of the flesh kept coming back. Therefore, I could not find peace, but I was constantly crucified by thoughts such as these: “You have committed this or that sin; you are guilty of envy, impatience, etc. Therefore, it was useless for you to enter this holy order, and all your good works are to no avail.” If I had properly understood Paul’s statements, “The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit” and “These are opposed to each other,” I would not have tortured myself to such a point but would have thought to myself, as I do nowadays: “Martin, you will never be completely without sin, because you still have the flesh. Therefore, you will always be aware of its conflict, according to the statement of Paul: ‘The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit.’ Do not despair, therefore, but fight back, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. Then you will not be under the Law.” (LW v. 27, p.72)

Ember Days after Holy Cross



The Light of the World – John 8:12

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Psalm 16



- 1 Pre-serve me, O God,
for in You I put my trust.
 - 2 O my soul, you have said to the Lord,
“You are my Lord, My goodness is noth-ing a-part from You.”
 - 3 As for the saints who are on the earth,
“They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my de-light.”
 - 4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten af-ter an-other god;
Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, Nor take up
their names on my lips.
 - 5 O Lord, You are the portion of my in-her-it-ance and my cup;
You main-tain my lot.
 - 6 The lines have fallen to me in pleas-ant plac-es;
Yes, I have a good in-herit-ance.
 - 7 I will bless the Lord who has giv-en me coun-sel;
My heart also instructs me in the night sea-sons.
 - 8 I have set the Lord al-ways be-fore me;
Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.
 - 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glo-ry re-joic-es;
My flesh al-so will rest in hope.
 - 10 For You will not leave my soul in She-ol,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see cor-rup-tion.
 - 11 You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are
pleas-ures for-ever-more.
- Glory be to the Fa-ther and to the Son,
And to the Ho-ly Spir-it.
As it was in the be-gin-ning,
Is now, and will be for-ev-er. A-men. *Repeat antiphon*

Psalms for Ember Days in September

Psalm 1



- 1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the
ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sin-ners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scorn-ful;
 - 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law he med-i-tates day and night.
 - 3 He shall be like a tree planted by the riv-ers of wa-ter,
That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf
also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall
pros-per.
 - 4 The un-god-ly are not so,
But are like the chaff which the wind drives a-way.
 - 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judg-ment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of the right-eous.
 - 6 For the Lord knows the way of the right-eous,
But the way of the ungod-ly shall per-ish.
- Glory be to the Fa-ther and to the Son,
And to the Ho-ly Spir-it.
As it was in the be-gin-ning,
Is now, and will be for-ev-er. A-men.**
- Repeat antiphon*

Psalm 33



- 1 Rejoice in the Lord, O you right-eous!
For praise from the up-right is beauti-ful.
- 2 Praise the Lord with the harp;
Make melody to Him with an instru-ment of ten strings.
- 3 Sing to Him a new song;
Play skillfully with a shout of joy.
- 4 For the word of the Lord is right,
And all His work is done in truth.
- 5 He loves righteous-ness and jus-tice;
The earth is full of the good-ness of the Lord.
- 6 By the word of the Lord the heav-ens were made,
And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.
- 7 He gathers the waters of the sea to-gether as a heap;
He lays up the deep in storehous-es.
- 8 Let all the earth fear the Lord;
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
- 9 For He spoke, and it was done;
He commanded, and it stood fast.
- 10 The Lord brings the counsel of the na-tions to noth-ing;
He makes the plans of the peo-ples of no ef-fect.
- 11 The counsel of the Lord stands for-ev-er,
The plans of His heart to all gen-er-a-tions.

- 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
The people He has chosen as His own in-herit-ance.
 - 13 The Lord looks from heav-en;
He sees all the sons of men.
 - 14 From the place of His dwel-ling He looks
On all the inhabi-tants of the earth;
 - 15 He fashions their hearts in-di-vidual-ly;
He con-sid-ers all their works.
 - 16 No king is saved by the multitude of an ar-my;
A mighty man is not de-liv-ered by great strength.
 - 17 A horse is a vain hope for safe-ty;
Neither shall it deliver any by its great strength.
 - 18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him,
On those who hope in His mer-cy,
 - 19 To deliver their soul from death,
And to keep them a-live in fam-ine.
 - 20 Our soul waits for the Lord;
He is our help and our shield.
 - 21 For our heart shall re-joice in Him,
Because we have trusted in His holy name.
 - 22 Let Your mercy, O Lord, be up-on us,
Just as we hope in You.
- Glory be to the Fa-ther and to the Son,**
And to the Ho-ly Spir-it.
As it was in the be-gin-ning,
Is now, and will be for-ev-er. A-men.
- Repeat antiphon*