

**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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.—May the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who proceeds from You, Lord, come to enlighten our souls and guide us to all truth, according to the promise of Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the same, one God, now and forever. **AMEN.**

Ember Friday.—It is the Holy Spirit who gathers together Your Church; God of mercy, grant that Your Church may never be troubled by the attacks of her enemies. This we ask of You through Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in the unity of the same, one God, now and forever. **AMEN.**

1 Luther himself wrote six hymns based on the parts of the Catechism.

Ember Saturday.—In Your kindness, Lord, may You see fit to pour into our souls the Holy Spirit whose wisdom has created us and whose providence governs us. This we ask of You through our Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of the same, one God, now and forever. **AMEN.**

**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. <sup>25</sup>When 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.

<sup>26</sup>However, 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, 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. <sup>27</sup>The 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.<sup>2</sup>

**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

**Holy Cross:** Wednesday: Confession  
 Friday: The Lord’s Supper  
 Saturday: Morning & Evening Prayer, Table Prayer, Table of Duties

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

+ <b>Hymn</b>	<b>#157</b>
+ “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 Spirit of the Lord fills the world. Alleluia.”	
C. Oh, come, let us worship him.	
+ <u>The Venite</u>	p.209f
“Oh, come, let us sing...”	
+ Office HYMN.....	<b>#877</b>
<u>Psalmody</u>	
Psalm 139	printed
Psalm 68	printed
<u>Reading</u>	
Wed – Acts 2:14-21, John 6:44-52	
Fri – Joel 2:23-27, Luke 5:17-26	
Sat – Romans 5:1-5, Luke 4:38-44	
<u>Common Responory</u>	p.211
“Forever, O Lord, your Word...”	
<u>Catechism Reading</u>	
Wed – Lord’s Prayer (p.302-3)	
Fri – Lord’s Prayer (p.302-3)	
Sat – Lord’s Prayer (p.302-3)	
Sermon	
Offering	
+ <u>Te Deum</u> .....	p.214-217
“Blessed be the Lord God...”	
+ <u>The Prayers</u> .....	p.219
Kyrie (“Lord, have mercy...”)	
Lord’s Prayer	
Salutation	
Collect of the Day	(inside)
Special Prayers	
Collect for Grace	
+ Benedicamus	p.222

## “Taught by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment”



*The Third Commandment:* “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.” I learn from this, first of all, that the sabbath day has not been instituted for the sake of being idle or indulging in worldly pleasures, but **in order that we may keep it holy**. However, it is not sanctified by our works and actions—our works are not holy—but **by the word of God**, which alone is wholly pure and sacred and which sanctifies everything that comes in contact with it, be it time, place, person, labor, rest, etc. According to St. Paul, who says that every creature is consecrated by word and prayer, I Timothy 4 [:5], our works are consecrated through the word. I realize therefore that on the sabbath I must, above all, hear and contemplate God’s word. Thereafter I should give thanks in my own words, praise God for all his benefits, and pray for myself and for the whole world. He who so conducts himself on the sabbath day keeps it holy. He who fails to do so is worse than the person who works on the sabbath.

**Second, I thank God** in this commandment for his great and beautiful goodness and grace which **he has given us in the preaching of his word**. And he has instructed us to make use of it, especially on the sabbath day, for the meditation of the human heart can never exhaust such a treasure. His word is the only light in the darkness of this life, a word of life, consolation, and supreme blessedness. Where this precious and saving word is absent, nothing remains but a fearsome and terrifying darkness, error and faction, death and every calamity, and the tyranny of the devil himself, as we can see with our own eyes every day.

**Third, I confess and acknowledge great sin and wicked ingratitude on my part** because all my life I have made disgraceful use of the sabbath and have thereby despised his precious and dear word in a wretched way. I have been too lazy, listless, and uninterested to listen to it, let alone to have desired it sincerely or to have been grateful for it. I have let my dear God proclaim his word to me in vain, have dismissed the noble treasure, and have trampled it underfoot. He has tolerated this in his great and divine mercy and has not ceased in his fatherly, divine love and faithfulness to keep on preaching to me and calling me to the salvation of my soul. For this I repent and ask for grace and forgiveness.

Fourth, **I pray for myself and for the whole world** that the gracious Father may preserve us in his holy word and not withdraw it from us because of our sin, ingratitude, and laziness. May he preserve us from factious spirits and false teachers, and may he send faithful and honest laborers into his harvest [Matt. 9:38], that is, devout pastors and preachers. May he grant us grace humbly to hear, accept, and honor their words as his own words and to offer our sincere thanks and praise” (LW, v.43, p.201)

## Ember Days after Pentecost



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