

Congregation at Prayer
✠ **Second Sunday after the Epiphany** ✠

*A Guide for Daily Family Prayer
For the Week of January 20th to 26th*

Catechesis Notes for the Week...

The benefits of Baptism can't be numbered or limited—how can you count or weigh the pure gold that comes from your sins being forgiven? And, as the Catechism also says, wherever sins are forgiven, there you also have life and salvation! So, while we can't necessarily number all the benefits of Baptism, the Catechism gives three chief benefits from which all others flow.

The first is that in Baptism our sins are forgiven. St. Peter confesses,

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38).

At the font God stands as judge, pronouncing you innocent, free, *forgiven*.

Now, this forgiveness isn't just first in a list of benefits. It is, indeed, the source of all the benefits that follow. And what follows isn't stuff *beyond* the forgiveness of sins—as if we could ever move past that—but the benefits that follow are the fruits of forgiveness. To speak of sins forgiven is to speak of how we stand before God without any condemnation. To be forgiven is to be set right—*justified*—before the face of the living God. That means life and salvation.

The second benefit is that Baptism rescues us from death and the devil. St. Paul says in his letter to the Romans,

“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” (Rom 6:3-4).

Baptism unites us to Christ's death as well as His victory over Satan and the grave. It's the grave that Satan wants most for us, and he'll do whatever it takes to keep you. Baptism rescues us from Satan and his lies.

Third, Baptism gives eternal salvation to all who believe. St. Peter says,

“Baptism now saves you.” (1 Pet 3:21)

And St. John says,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5)

In Baptism God saves us from sin, death, and the devil so that we could live before Him forever.

And there's still more! Baptism is our Lord's work for us—and for that we rejoice in His coming to us with more benefits than we even know!

Baptismal Benefits

Responsive Prayer 2, *Lutheran Service Book* p.285

Learn-By-Heart Scripture...

John 3:5

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

Learn-By-Heart Catechism...

Baptism

What Benefits does Baptism Give?

It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are these words and promises of God?

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16)

Daily Readings...

Monday (1/20): Ezekiel 47:1-14, 21-23; Romans 9:19-33

Tuesday (1/21): Joel 1:1-20; Romans 10:1-21

Wednesday (1/22): Joel 2:1-17; Romans 11:1-24

Thursday (1/23): Joel 2:18-32; Romans 11:25-12:13

Friday (1/24): Joel 3:1-21; Romans 12:14-13:14

Saturday (1/25): Zechariah 1:1-21; Romans 14:1-23

Sunday (1/26): Zechariah 2:1-3:10; Romans 15:1-13

Prayer of the Week...

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Psalms of the Week...

Psalm 19

Hymn of the Week... “*Salvation Unto Us Has Come*”

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Looking Forward to Next Week...

Acts 20:28-35 Titus 1:1-9 Luke 10:1-9