

# Concordia Lutheran Conference

## Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

**Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity**

**- MONDAY -**

*If I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ.*

– II Corinthians 2:10.

My dear Christian, when considering and meditating upon what the Word of God says concerning the Office of the Keys, what, then, must be your faith, what, then, must be your attitude with respect to the public administration of this office as performed by the pastor of your congregation? You must then say with all your heart: I believe that when the called minister of God deals with us by His divine command, this is as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, dealt with us Himself. If your pastor does anything *without* the command of Christ, then it is of no value. But when he does something *by* the command of Christ, then he does this in the person of Christ; and then this is as valid and certain in heaven also, as if Christ, our dear Lord, did it Himself. When the pastor preaches the Gospel in its truth and purity, this is just as valid and certain as if Christ Himself stood there and preached. Just so it is with Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and also with holy absolution. When your pastor pronounces absolution, or forgiveness of sins, to you, then this is just as valid before God in heaven as if Christ, our Lord, Himself pronounced the absolution to you. Remember, the pastor does this in the place of the congregation, in the person of Christ. If, in the due order prescribed by Christ, the pastor retains the sins of a manifest and impenitent sinner, and excludes him from the Christian congregation, then this, too, is as valid and certain before God in heaven as if Christ, our Lord, had done it visibly, in person. And after an excommunicated person has repented of his sins and is willing to amend, when the pastor again absolves him (forgives his sins to him), and when the congregation again receives him into membership, it is as if Christ Himself had done the forgiving. Will you consider all this carefully?

**PRAYER.** – Lord Jesus, I thank Thee that for the benefit and consolation of Thy people Thou hast instituted within the local congregation the holy ministry through which Thou art truly present, to distribute the treasures of Thy grace. I pray Thee to preserve such ministry in truth and purity among us and among our children. And grant us, O Savior, the Holy Ghost, that we make proper use of such ministry for the strengthening of our faith and for our eternal salvation. Amen.

O faithful God, we worship Thee!  
Thou pardon'st our iniquity,  
Thou grantest help in sin's distress,  
And soul and body Thou dost bless.

Thou, through Thy servant, say'st to me:  
"Thy sins are all forgiven thee,  
Depart in peace; but sin no more,  
And e'er my pardoning grace adore."

Hymn 425, 1. 2. (ELHB)

\* Scripture reading for **Monday**. Acts 16:25-33

Theme this week: **Faith**