The Divine Service (and other services) as an apologetic of the sanctity of life

CLC Apologetics Forum

1 December, AD 2023

**Introduction**

Pew Research Center *Religious Landscape Study*

1. Conducted in 2014
2. Telephone interviews with “more than 35,000 Americans from all 50 states.” <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/about-the-religious-landscape-study/#data-details>; 459 identified as LCMS (small n)
3. 46% of members of LCMS congregations think that abortion should be legal in all or most cases; 3% didn’t know
4. 36% of those who attend religious services at least once a week think that abortion should be legal in all or most cases (n=204)
5. 37% of those who attend religious services at least once a week strongly favor or favor same sex marriage
6. 18% think that humans evolved due to natural processes; 32% think that humans evolved due to God’s design (39% of those attending religious services at least once a week, n=143)
7. Best available data, consistent with anecdotal reports
8. No data on euthanasia/assisted suicide

Yet, those who are in church are hearing, reading, confessing, praying and singing the sanctity of life from fertilization to forever!

The Divine Service (and all Christian liturgy) is all about life

Of course, it is all Scripture!

“We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.”

Dr. Luther’s Post-Communion Collect – refreshed is literally “brought to life”

“… the chief purpose of all ceremonies is to teach the people what they need to know about Christ.” AC XXIV 3

“…the words first connect the bread and cup to the sacrament; bread and cup embrace the body and blood of Christ; body and blood of Christ embrace the new testament; the new testament embraces the forgiveness of sins; forgiveness embraces eternal life and salvation. See, all this the words of the Supper offer and give us, and we embrace it by faith.” Martin Luther, *Confession Concerning Christ’s Supper*, AE 37:338

“The word places the believer into a new relationship with God, that of child of the Father, and brother and sister of Jesus. With this new relationship is the empowerment to live as a child of God. This empowerment is the Holy Spirit himself, who enacts in a person what is declared and promised in the word. The spirit inscribes the word into the body of the believer through the washing of Baptism, through the creative promise, and through the continued nourishing of Jesus’ body and blood. This suggests a structure of Christian life on earth girded by Scripture, sacraments and ethic. More than this, it suggests a movement or maturing in the Christian life that comes in hearing the word, being embodied through the sacraments in the body of Christ, and living out the Christian life of witness as worship and ethical service to others. The body becomes the place that bears the ‘marking’ or ‘character’ of the word of God. Because the word is embodied, it is also loved out.

I am arguing, then, that Christian worship ought to be recognized as a fundamental source of ethics. Yet, although worship is a source, traditional philosophical methods of deducing actions from principles do not hold. Instead, ethics grows from worship. Ethics focuses on the gracious power of the word and its verification in ethical action. Christ gives himself in the speaking of his word in Scripture and sacrament; Christians give themselves in the life of witness, both confession of faith and acts of love. Nevertheless, even as the liturgical is verified in ‘ethical reinterpretation,’ so the ethical always returns to the liturgical and is reinterpreted liturgically, as an action brought forth in response to the grace of God in the sacrament. It is this response to grace that makes the action specifically Christian, and specifically ethical for that matter.”

Gifford A. Grobien, “Righteousness, Mystical Union, and Moral Formation in Christian Worship” in *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 77 (2013): 141-163 (capitalization pattern per the journal)

(*Lex credendi*) 🡪 *Lex orandi* 🡪 *Lex credendi* 🡪 *Lex vivendi*

Read Luke 10:23-37 and LSB 683 (Gospel and Chief hymn for Trinity 13).

Consider that we are the half-dead man, sinners having been severely wounded by other sinners; Jesus is the Samaritan, who has taken mercy on us, bound our wounds, treated them with oil and wine (Law/Gospel preaching, Sacraments; note that He willingly makes Himself ritually unclean per the Levitical law, taking the sin of the half-dead man upon Himself, similar to when He takes the dead girl by the hand to bring her to life [Matthew 9:25, Gospel for Trinity 24]); the inn is the Church and the innkeeper the Pastor; Jesus gives the Pastor a generous sum to take care of man and promises more when He returns, to match whatever more he has spent.

1. What does this teach us about the gifts we receive in the Divine Service (*Gottesdienst*)?
2. What is the *telos* of our healing?
3. What empowers us to truly love God and neighbor (i.e. fulfill both Tables of the 10 Commandments – Exodus 20:1-17, alternate OT reading for Trinity 6)?
4. How does Paul Gerhardt express this in the hymn?
5. What does this teach us about how God values life? How does that shape our view?
6. How might you use this to address someone who thinks that individuals who are terminally ill should have the right to “medical aid in dying” or euthanasia?

Excursus: Pagan Worship, all about death

1. Man’s service to the gods made with human hands (Deuteronomy 4:28, 28:36, 64; Psalm 115:4-8, 135:15-18; c.f. Acts 17:24-25), violates First Commandment (Exodus 20:3-6; Deuteronomy 5:7-10).
2. Fertility, agriculture <https://www.thenotsoinnocentsabroad.com/blog/ancient-gods-of-the-old-testament>
3. Child sacrifice (slaughter/fire; pagans, and God’s people syncretizing with them) – Leviticus 18:21, 20:2-5; Deuteronomy 18:10; 1 Kings 11:7, 33; 2 Kings 3:27, 16:3, 17:17, 21:6, 23:10; Psalm 106:37; Isaiah 57:5; Jeremiah 7:31, 19:5, 32:35; Ezekiel 16:20-21, 20:31, 23:37; Acts 7:43. Archeological evidence, including that of sacrifice of children with defects.
4. Defiles the *name* of God (ex. Leviticus 18:21) יְהוָֽה (I AM who I AM, or Hifil: I AM *who causes to be*);Ἰησοῦς, from יְהוֹשׁוּעַ (YHWH saves; I AM the Bread of Life [John 6:35]; I AM the Resurrection and the Life [John 11:25]; I AM the Way, and the Truth, and the Life [John 14:6]); Genesis 22:1-14 (OT for *Judica*, also through v. 18 at Resurrection Vigil); God *alone* sacrifices His Son to save humankind; for human child sacrifice, c.f. Genesis 3:5 (from OT for *Invocavit*).
5. Pagan and syncretistic practices continue today, examples: statue at Tucson PP; pagan and syncretistic lawsuits against abortion bans as non-protective of their “religious freedom” <https://www.aclu-in.org/en/news/indiana-abortion-ban-religious-freedom>
6. Temple prostitution – Genesis 38: 21-22; Deuteronomy 23:17-18; 1 Kings 14:24, 15:12; 2 Kings 23:7; Hosea 4:14; Amos 2:7; possibly 1 Corinthians 6:15-20 (much debate about whether refers to temple prostitutes); 2 Maccabees 6:4-5. (Contrast for example 1 Timothy 2:8-3:13)
7. Abortion/infant exposure
8. Ezekiel 16 and others: worship of other gods seen as being a faithless bride
9. Suicide and euthanasia common, Pliny the Elder (AD 23-79): “The ability to commit suicide is the greatest advantage God has given humankind,” quoted in Ian Dowbiggin, *Euthanasia, A Concise History of Life, Death, God and Medicine* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), p. 9; Pliny the Younger (AD 62-114) on *euthanasia*, “good death” Dowbiggin p. 7.

**Life and bioethics in the Divine Service (and other liturgies)**

Man created, fallen and forgiven

Read Genesis 1:26-31 (Resurrection Vigil; Trinity 21: entire reading is Genesis 1:1-2:3); 1 John 4:8,16 (Eve of the Feast of the Nativity); Nicene Creed, First Article

1. What does it mean to be created in God’s image? (Ephesians 5:9 [*Oculi*]; c.f. Colossians 3:10 [Epiphany 5 in some]; Ap II 20)
2. Why did God create man? Why did He create everything else?
3. To what purpose did He create man in two genders?
4. What is unique about how Moses describes God’s creation after day 6? What does this teach us about the physical world and our bodies?
5. How does this passage proclaim the sanctity of life (hint: to what do these verses point)?

Read Genesis 1:2 and 26, 2:7-17 (Trinity 9), Luke 1:46-47 (Visitation; alternate Gospel for *Rorate coeli*), Psalm 51:10 (Ash Wednesday, *Exaudi*, Trinity 9, DS3 Offertory; c.f. 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

1. How did God form the man? How did He make him a living being?
2. The word “creature” in verse 7 in the ESV is נֶפֶשׁ, *nephesh*, translated in the KJV as “soul,” and by Luther as *Seele* or soul (1545 *Lutherbibel*). What is the relationship between soul and life? What does this mean for the single-cell zygote, and what are the implications for the “morning after pill,” certain contraceptives, *in-vitro* fertilization and biomedical research?
3. What three parts make a whole person? How do they interconnect? (See Luther in <https://wolfmueller.co/martin-luther-on-body-soul-spirit/>).
4. In the Genesis 2 text, how did God provide for the physical needs of the man? How did He provide for his spiritual needs?
5. How long was Adam supposed to live? How does this proclaim the sanctity of life?

Read Genesis 3:1-21 (*Invocavit*); Psalm 51:12 (Ash Wednesday, *Exaudi*, Trinity 9, DS3 Offertory); John 19:30 (Good Friday); John 20:19-23 (*Quasimodogeniti*); Romans 3:23-24 (Reformation Day); Romans 5:1, *Reminiscere*); Romans 8:29 (St. James the Elder); 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 (Resurrection Sunrise); 2 Corinthians 5:21, (Good Friday); DS3 Confession (LSB p. 184); Nicene Creed, Second and Third Articles; *Collect for Good Friday*: “Almighty God, graciously behold this Your family, for whom our Lord Jesus was willing to be betrayed, and delivered into the hands of sinful men, and to suffer death upon the cross…”; *Dietrich Collect for Trinity 6*: “Lord God, heavenly Father, we confess that there is no good in us, our hearts, flesh and blood being so corrupted by sin, that we never in this life can be without sinful lust and concupiscence; therefore we beseech You dear Father, forgive us these sins, and let Your Holy Spirit so cleanse our hearts that we may desire and love Your Word, abide by it, and thus by Your grace be forever saved…”; LSB 389 (Chief hymn, Christmas 1, note v. 4); LSB 562 (Chief Hymn, Trinity 6); LSB 607 (Chief hymn, Ash Wednesday, Trinity 21)

1. In Genesis 3:5, how did the serpent entice the woman? How is this seen in present-day secular (pagan) bioethics?
2. What implication did this have for being in the image of God (see Trinity 6 Collect; LSB 562.1-3)?
3. Who is responsible for death having entered the world? Who deserves death?
4. What has God promised? When did He deliver?
5. By what means are we justified, namely declared right with the Father?
6. What does He gift through these words spoken by Pastor: “… in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”? How is this comforting for those who have acted in ways that violate the sanctity of life?
7. What does this mean for believers? For non-believers (see 1 Timothy 2:1-4, *Rogate*; 2 Peter 3:9, Trinity 26)? See also Isaiah 55:1-9 (10-11; Easter Vigil and Trinity 20; Vigil collect: “Almighty God, by Your Word You created and sustain all things, and by Your Spirit renew Your creation. Grant now the water of life to all who thirst for You that they may bring forth abundant fruit in Your glorious Kingdom.”)
8. What alone gives us true meaning, and makes us valuable with lives worth living? Who is excluded from this?
9. How does this proclaim the sanctity of life?

Prenatal life

Read Exodus 20:13 (alternate reading for Trinity 6); Luke 1:26-38 (Annunciation) and 39-45 (Visitation, part of alternate reading for Advent 4); Luke 2:12 (Feast of the Nativity, Midnight); Luke 2:21 (Circumcision); Psalm 51:5 (Ash Wednesday, *Exaudi*, Trinity 9); Psalm 22:10 (Maundy Thursday); Jeremiah 1:5 (Conversion of St. Paul); Psalm 139:13-16 (St. Thomas, Conversion of St. Paul, St. James the Elder, St. Bartholomew, St. Andrew); Creed, First and Second Articles, to “and was made man,” LSB 356 (Chief hymn, Annunciation); LSB 385.3 (Chief hymn, Christmas 2 and Visitation); LSB 395.4 (Chief hymn, The Epiphany of our Lord); LSB 670.2 (Chief hymn, St. Mary)

1. How did our Lord, through whom all things were made (John 1:3, Feast of the Nativity Day) take on human flesh?
2. Consider Luke 1, vv. 26 (24-25), 39, 41-45. At what stage of development was John when he leaped in Elizabeth’s womb? At roughly what stage of development was Jesus at the time? Consider the *Magnificat* which follows (Visitation, alternate text for *Rorate coeli*, Vespers and Evening Prayer), what does this tell us about Jesus at that stage of His human development?
3. Consider Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 22:10 and the Psalm 139 verses. Consider also Pastor’s blessing of the babies in the womb when their mothers kneel at the Table to receive the Lord’s Supper. What does this say about God’s care for babies in the womb? From what stage?
4. Note that the Hebrew word for womb, רֶחֶם, *rechem* (Psalm 22:10, Jeremiah 1:5 and others) is derived from the verb “to have compassion,” רָחַם, *racham* (also the noun for compassion). What is the Holy Spirit telling us here about God’s design for the womb?
5. Read Luke 2:12. Note that the Greek word for a baby who has been born is the same as that for a baby in the womb (1:41, 44), namely βρέφος, *brephos*. What does this say about babies who are *in-utero* vs. those who have emerged from the womb?
6. Consider LSB 395.4 and consider Jeremiah 1:5 and Luke 2:21. What do having been loved from before the foundation of the earth, having been intimately known by God before the beginning of formation in the belly, and having been assigned a name before conception tell us about the importance to God of germinal, embryonic and fetal life?
7. Consider Psalm 51:5 and the following from the Order of Baptism (in use at CLC, recovered from Dr. Luther’s Orders of Baptism [AE 53:95-109], which were in turn continued in abbreviated form, from historic church practice): “Therefore depart, you unclean spirit, and make room for the Holy Spirit in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”; “I adjure you, O unclean spirit, by the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit that you come out of and depart from this servant of Jesus Christ”; “Ephphatha, that is, be opened, but thou, devil, flee; for God’s Judgement comes speedily.” Consider also that historically, Baptisms have taken place shortly after birth. What does this tell us about when spirit becomes a part of the individual?
8. How does the fifth commandment apply to chemical and surgical abortion? Beginning at what stage?
9. How does this proclaim the sanctity of life beginning at fertilization?

Baptism

Read Matthew 28:18b-19 (Order of Baptism); Mark 10:13-16, 16:16a (Order of Baptism); Romans 6:3-4 (Trinity 6); 1 Peter 3:21 (Order of Baptism); the opening sentence in the DS, Order of Baptism, Order of Holy Matrimony, Funeral Service, Corporate Confession and Absolution; Daily Prayers (Morning, Noon, Early Evening, Close of the Day); Order of Baptism liturgy; *Collect from Resurrection Vigil following readings from Genesis 7, 8, 9*: “O Lord, You kill and You raise to life; You brought the flood upon a wicked and perverse generation, and yet You saved faithful Noah and his family in the ark. Keep us in safety in the ark of Christ’s body, the Church, that Your mercy may come to its fullness and Your salvation preached to the ends of the earth…”; LSB 395 (Chief hymn, The Epiphany of our Lord); LSB 407 (Chief hymn, The Baptism of our Lord); LSB 420 (Chief hymn, St. James the Elder); LSB 594 (not a Chief hymn, but we use often).

1. Whose work is Baptism?
2. What happens at Baptism?
3. Consider, from the Order of Baptism: “(Name), receive the sign of the holy cross both upon your forehead and upon your heart to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.”; also, LSB 395.4; LSB 420; LSB 594.2. Where was that which we receive at Baptism won for us? By who?
4. Consider, from the Order of Baptism: “(Name), I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” coupled with LSB 395.2 [consider Nicolai’s original text: “that I may remain a living rib in the body of Your elect,” where we sing, “In Your one body let us be as living branches of a tree, your life our lives supplying.” See Philipp Nicolai, *The Joy of Eternal Life*, Matthew Carver, trans. (St. Louis: CPH, 2021), p. 272]; LSB 407.4, LSB 420.1, LSB 594.3. What is taking place at Baptism that is nurtured in God’s Word and the Lord’s Supper and reaches its *telos* on the Last Day and into eternity?
5. Is Baptism restricted to those of a particular race/tribe/ethnicity? Is Baptism restricted to those without intellectual or physical disability? What is required of candidates for Baptism and their sponsors (see Order of Baptism, LSB pp. 269, 270)? Who empowers them to meet the requirements (c.f. LSB 768, Chief hymn, Trinity 1; LSB 823, Chief hymn, *Sexagesima*)? Does this rule out infants and individuals with severe developmental delay?
6. How does Baptism proclaim the sanctity of life?

Childhood

Read Exodus 20:12 (alternate OT reading, Trinity 6); Luke 2:51 (Epiphany 1).

1. How are children to treat their parents? For how long? Who did so perfectly?
2. What gifts does/did God bestow on us through our parents?
3. How does a godly childhood proclaim the sanctity of life?

Marriage and Parenthood

Read Genesis 1:28; Genesis 2:18-24 (Holy Matrimony); Psalm 127:3-5 (St. Joseph); Matthew 2:13-23 (all read on Christmas 2, vv. 13-18 on Holy Innocents and vv. 13-15 and 19-23 on St. Joseph); Matthew 19:4-6/Mark 10:1-9 (Holy Matrimony); Mark 10:13-16; Luke 1:38 (Annunciation); Luke 2:19 (Nativity of our Lord, Dawn); Luke 2:51-52 (Epiphany 1); John 2:1-11 (Epiphany 2); John 16:21 (*Jubilate*); Ephesians 5:3 (*Oculi*); Ephesians 5:22-33 (Holy Matrimony, alternative reading for Epiphany 2); Galatians 5:19-21 (Trinity 14); 1 John 4:8,16 (Eve of the Feast of the Nativity); Order of Holy Matrimony liturgy; *Collect from Epiphany 1*: “Lord God, heavenly Father, who in mercy has established the Christian home among us: We beseech You so to rule and direct our hearts, that we may be good examples to children and servants, and not offend them by word or deed, but faithfully teach them to love Your Church and hear Your blessed Word. Give them Your spirit and grace, that this seed may bring forth good fruit, so that our home-life may be conducive to Your glory, honor and praise, to our own improvement and welfare, and give offense to no one…”; *Collect from Epiphany 2*: “Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank You that of Your grace You have instituted holy matrimony, in which You keep us from unchastity, and other offenses: we beseech You to send Your blessing upon every husband and wife, that they may not provoke each other to anger and strife, but live peaceably together in love and godliness, receive Your gracious help in all temptations, and rear their children in accordance with Your will; grant us all to walk before you, in purity and holiness, to put all our trust in you, and lead such lives on earth, that in the world to come we may have everlasting life…”; LSB 860 (not a Chief hymn, Marriage); LSB 863 (Chief hymn, St. Joseph).

1. When did God institute marriage?
2. What purpose/s did He assign to marriage?
3. Who are the two parties in a godly marriage? Why can it not be otherwise?
4. Of what is marriage a reflection? How is this expressed in the Order of Holy Matrimony?
5. What constitutes sexual purity? What does not?
6. How does Solomon describe children?
7. What does all of this mean for procedures like *in-vitro* fertilization and surrogacy?
8. How do Mary and Joseph exemplify godly parenting?
9. How do marriage and parenting proclaim the sanctity of life?

Adoption

Read John 1:12-13 (Nativity of our Lord Day); Romans 8:14-17 (Trinity 8); Galatians 4:3-7 (Christmas 1 and, from v. 4, St. Mary); LSB 470/471, stanza 1 (Chief hymn, *Quasimodogeniti*).

1. What has God done for us?
2. With what rights has He gifted us?
3. How can this act of God be seen as rescue?
4. How can we show this love toward others, even beginning from shortly after fertilization?
5. How does this proclaim the sanctity of life?

God sustains our lives

Read Matthew 21:9 (*Ad Te Levavi*, *Palmarum*); Numbers 6:24-26 (Circumcision of our Lord); Psalm 146 (*Quinquagesima*, Trinity 12, Trinity 15; c.f. LSB 797, St. James of Jerusalem); Matthew 4:1-4 (*Invocavit*); John 6:1-15 (*Laetare*); 1 Corinthians 11:23-32 (Maundy Thursday); Isaiah 6:1-7 (Holy Trinity); Mark 8:1-9 (Trinity 7); Psalm 145:15-16 (Gradual, Trinity 20); Deuteronomy 8:3 (National Day of Thanksgiving); DS3 Preface, *Sanctus*, Words of Institution, *Pax Domini*, *Agnus Dei*, *Nunc Dimittis*, Benediction; *Dietrich Collect for* *Laetare*: “Lord God, heavenly Father, Who by Your Son fed five thousand men in the desert with five loaves and two fishes: We implore You to abide graciously with us also in the fullness of Your blessing. Preserve us from greed and the cares of this life, that we may seek Your kingdom and righteousness first, and in all things perceive Your fatherly goodness…”; *Dietrich Collect for Trinity 7*: “Lord God, heavenly Father, by Your Son in the wilderness You abundantly fed four thousand men besides women and children with seven loaves and a few small fish: we beseech You, graciously abide among us with Your blessing, and keep us from covetousness and the cares of this life, that we may seek first Your kingdom and Your righteousness, and in all things needful for body and soul, experience Your ever-present help…” (note the similarities in the two Collects!); *Collect for National Day of Thanksgiving*: “Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, Whose mercies are new to us every morning, and Who, though we have in no wise deserved Your goodness, abundantly provides for our body and soul; Give us, we pray You, Your Holy Spirit, that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness toward us, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience…;” LSB 656 (Chief hymn, *Invocavit*); LSB 617 (Chief hymn, Maundy Thursday); LSB 708.2 (Chief hymn, Trinity 19); LSB 819 (Chief hymn, Trinity 7); LSB 960 (Festival Service *Sanctus*).

1. How does God sustain us in body and soul? What is the connection between creation and salvation (note the first stanza in LSB 819)?
2. What reminders do we have in the liturgy that reinforce the Sacramental Union? How does the tune in LSB 960 reinforce that?
3. “Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying…” With whom are we present at the Lord’s Table? Of what is this a “now and not yet”?
4. Why does Jesus give us His Word and His Very Body and Blood?
5. What is the “peace of the Lord”? (Both the Hebrew שָׁלוֹם *shalom* and the Greek εἰρήνη *eirene* imply completeness, wholeness.)
6. What are you saying in essence when you sing the *Nunc Dimittis*?
7. Through what means does God sustain our physical lives? Through what means does He care for the less fortunate (note that Psalm 146 shows up *three* times each year in the Historic One-Year Lectionary!)?
8. What should we not do in response (think 2020)?
9. What is meet and right for us to do in response?
10. How does all of this proclaim the sanctity of life?

Dehumanizing “the other”

Read Matthew 15:21-28 (*Reminiscere*); Luke 10:23-37 (Trinity 13); Matthew 9:18-26 (Trinity 24); Romans 3:21-25 (Reformation); Dr. Luther’s Post-Communion Collect; *Dietrich Collect for* *Reminiscere*: “Lord God, heavenly Father, grant us, we implore You, Your Holy Spirit, that He may strengthen our hearts and confirm our faith and hope in Your grace and mercy, so that, although we have reason to fear because of our conscience, our sin, and our unworthiness, we may nevertheless, with the woman of Canaan, hold fast to Your grace, and in every trial and temptation find You a very present help and refuge…”; LSB 708.2 (Chief hymn, Trinity 19).

1. Who is the “other” in these Gospel texts?
2. What does Jesus do for them? At what (by the societal norms) risks to Him? What does He ultimately do for them?
3. What did Jesus do for us when we were the “other” in God’s eyes?
4. Consider those who are often considered the “other” around us: racial and ethnic groups, religious groups (other church bodies, non-Christians, ex: Jews, Mormons, Muslims), LGBTQ+, political opponents, immigrants, abortion industry workers, individuals who assist suicide or perform euthanasia, criminals, terrorists, etc. What did Jesus do for them? How are we called to regard them and serve them (and does this mean that we are to be satisfied to leave them in sin as the case may be, and/or that they don’t have to pay an earthly price for crimes committed)?
5. What are the theological issues with critical theory/wokeness?
6. How does this proclaim the sanctity of life?

Illness/Aging/End of Life

Read Isaiah 40:6-8 (Gaudete); John 1:1-5 (Nativity Day); Luke 2:36-38 (Christmas 1); Luke 18:35-43 (*Quinquagesima*); Genesis 3:19 (*Invocavit*); John 19:30 (Good Friday); Genesis 1:1 (Resurrection Vigil, Trinity 21); 1 Corinthians 15:12-25 (Resurrection Sunrise); John 20:1-18 (Resurrection Sunrise); Psalm 23/LSB 709 (*Misericordias Domini*); Luke 16:19-31 (Trinity 1); Romans 8:18-23 (Trinity 4); Exodus 20:12-13 (alternate OT for Trinity 6); Ruth 1:1-18 (Trinity 6), Psalm 92:12-15 (Trinity 10); Luke 7:11-17 (Trinity 16); Matthew 9:1-8 (Trinity 19); Philippians 1:6 (Trinity 22); Philippians 3:20-21 (Trinity 23); Revelation 1:5b-7 (Holy Week Wednesday); Revelation 7:9-17 (St. Laurence, All Saints’ Day); Matthew 25:1-10 (Trinity 27); *Dietrich* *Collect for Trinity 16*: “Lord God, heavenly Father, who sent Your Son to be made flesh, that by His death He might atone for our sins and deliver us from eternal death: We pray You, confirm in our hearts the hope that our Lord Jesus Christ, who with but a word raised the widow’s son, in like manner will raise us on the last day, and grant us eternal life…”; *Collect for All Saints’ Day*: “O almighty and everlasting God, who through Your only-begotten and beloved Son, Jesus Christ, sanctifies all Your elected and beloved: Grant us strength to follow their faith, hope and charity, that we together with them may come to eternal life…”; Creed, First Article; Funeral Service Liturgy; LSB 458 (Chief hymn, Resurrection morning); LSB 508.5-7 (Chief hymn, Trinity 26); LSB 516 (Chief hymn, Trinity 27); LSB 708.3 (Chief hymn, Trinity 19); LSB 758 (Chief hymn, Trinity 16); LSB 760 (Chief hymn, Trinity 15); LSB 849 (Chief hymn, *Quinquagesima*)

1. Why do we get sick, age and die?
2. How does God work through the elderly?
3. How are we to treat the elderly?
4. What does Pastor’s bringing the Lord’s Supper (or Deacon bringing a Service of the Word) to the sick indicate regarding God’s care for them? What comfort do we have when we are sick, or otherwise struggling in this vale of tears (think of the hymns of Philipp Nicolai, for example)?
5. Who alone determines the moment of our death (c.f. Funeral Service Concluding Collect)? How does that inform our treatment of the dying? How does that inform our response to assisted suicide and euthanasia (even by starvation and dehydration)? Does this mean that we must always force feed or tube feed?
6. What happens to the body, soul and spirit at death (c.f. discussion on creation above)?
7. Read the *Nunc Dimittis* and antiphon in the Funeral Service liturgy. Does one need necessarily to hold on to life at all cost? What do Jesus’ death and Resurrection mean for us? To what sure and certain hope do we look forward?
8. How does all of this inform how we treat the body at death?
9. How does this proclaim the sanctity of life?

Summary: Lord’s Prayer

Open the LSB to the Small Catechism, Part 3, Lord’s Prayer (pp. 323-325)

1. Introduction: How does God show us that our lives matter to Him?
2. First petition: How does God’s name proclaim the sanctity of life?
3. Second petition: How important are we to God that He has given us His Holy Spirit?
4. Third petition: What is God’s will on life issues?
5. Fourth petition: How does God sustain life? By what means?
6. Fifth petition: What hope is there for us? Consider those who trespass against us. What did Jesus do for them? What did He do for us? What are we called to do?
7. Sixth petition: How can we respond when tempted to abortion? Assisted suicide? Any sin?
8. Seventh petition: From who/what has God promised to deliver us?
9. Conclusion: How does this comfort us in our struggles?

Other sanctity of life topics for a future time

**To ponder**

How might our liturgies, readings and hymns (and sermons) help you engage your neighbor in the pew who does not hold to a Biblical view of the sanctity of life?

*Appendix: “Named” Sundays*

Advent (from introit)

*Ad Te Levavi*; *Populus Zion*; *Gaudete*; *Rorate coeli*

Pre-Lent/Gesimatide (from approximate number of Sundays until Resurrection)

*Septuagesima*; *Sexagesima*; *Quinquagesima* (or alternatively *Estomihi* from introit)

Lent (from introit)

*Invocavit/bit*; *Reminiscere*; *Oculi*; *Laetare*; *Judica*; *Palmarum*

Eastertide (from introit except *Rogate*, which is the theme of that day)

Resurrection; *Quasimodogeniti*; *Misericordias Domini*; *Jubilate*; *Cantate*; *Rogate*; *Exaudi*