

The Parish at Prayer and Study

The Second Week in Advent

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT (Populus Zion)

Malachi 4:1–6; Romans 15:4–13; Luke 21:25–36

The Lord Comes on the Last Day

The day on which our Lord returns will be a “*great and awesome day*” (Mal. 4:5). For He will come in a cloud with great power and glory. To the wicked and the proud, it will be a Day of judgment that will “*set them ablaze*” (Mal. 4:1). The signs preceding this Day will bring them fear and fainting. But to those who believe, who fear the name of the Lord, this Day is one to look forward to and rejoice in: “. . . *straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near*” (Luke 21:28). Christ our Redeemer is coming; the Sun of Righteousness will bring healing in His wings. Let us, then, give attention to the words of the Lord, which do not pass away. Let us “*through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures*” (Rom. 15:4) be strengthened in our hope by the Holy Spirit and watch diligently for Jesus’ coming. Then, by God’s grace, we shall escape all these things that will come to pass and stand before the Son of Man.

TWO-YEAR SCRIPTURE READING PLAN

Mon: Gen. 12:10-13:18

Tues: Gen. 14:1-15:21

Wed: Gen. 16:1-17:27

Thurs: Gen. 18:1-19:38

Fri: Gen. 20:1-21:34

Sat: Gen. 22:1-24

DAILY THEMES FOR PRAYER

(The following suggestions may be used to establish a pattern of daily and weekly prayer. Christians pray not only for themselves, but for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people, according to their needs. These daily suggestions are meant to assist the Christian to that end, and to be a supplement to the Christian’s other daily prayers)

Sun: For the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.

Mon: For faith to live in the promise of Holy Baptism; for one’s calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.

Tue: For deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with sin.

Wed: For marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.

Thur: For the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood.

Fri: For the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying (and all who have requested our prayers).

Sat: For faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God’s Word on the Lord’s Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ’s Holy Gifts in the Divine Service.

COLLECT OF THE WEEK

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

HYMN OF THE WEEK: LSB 333 “Once He Came in Blessing”

PSALM SCHEDULE

(From the “Table of Psalms for Daily Prayer” in Lutheran Service Book, p. 304. The Book of Psalms is the Bible’s hymnal/prayerbook. It behooves the Christian, therefore, to pray the Psalms daily, and the Table we will use throughout the year allows us to do so seasonally)

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
ADVENT							
Morning	24	122	33	50	18:1-20	102	90
Evening	25; 110	40; 67	85; 91	14; 16	126; 62	130; 16	80; 72

CATECHESIS FOR THE WEEK

The Second Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

Bible Story: “The Rich Man and Lazarus” (Luke 16:19-31)

(NOTE: This is the Bible Story for the First-Third Commandments)

Excerpts from Dr. Luther’s Large Catechism on the Second Commandment

As the First Commandment has inwardly instructed the heart and taught faith, so this commandment leads us outward and directs our lips and the tongue into the right relation to God (371:50).

“It is a misuse of God’s name if we call upon the Lord God in any way whatsoever to support falsehood or wrong of any kind.” Therefore what this commandment forbids is appealing to God’s name falsely or taking his name upon our lips when our heart knows or should know that the facts are otherwise—for example, where men take oaths in court and one side lies against the other. God’s name cannot be more grievously abused than for purposes of falsehood and deceit (371:51).

The greatest abuse, however, occurs in spiritual matters, which pertain to the conscience, when false preachers arise and peddle their lying nonsense as the Word of God (372:54).

God at the same time gives us to understand that we are to use his name properly, for it has been revealed and give to us precisely for our use and benefit. Since we are forbidden here to use the holy name in support of falsehood or wickedness, it follows, conversely, that we are commanded to use it in the service of truth and all that is good—for example, when we swear properly where it is necessary and required (373:63-64).

How Christians Should Be Taught to Confess from the Second Commandment

My God has placed His name upon me in Holy Baptism and made me His dearly beloved child through my dear Lord Jesus Christ. In His name He has revealed Himself to me as the God of love that I might worship Him.

Questions for self-examination regarding the Second Commandment

Do I curse? Have I cursed? Do I use God's name cheaply for oaths that are frivolous or false?

Do I stand up and swear by God's name when it is for the truth of the Gospel or the benefit of my neighbor in need?

Do I pray with fervor in times of trouble? Am I bored and indifferent in prayer?

Is it so that I cannot speak about God truly because I am bored with God's Word and neglect the study of the catechism and doctrine? Is my heart and life in the praise of God in worship? Am I mouthing things while my heart is far away?

Is my life—sealed with the name of God in Baptism—characterized by thanksgiving and praise?

Prayer after self-examination

Lord God, heavenly Father, I confess that I have not obeyed Your Second Commandment as I ought. I have not hallowed Your name at all times, but have used it cheaply or paid no mind to it far too often. My prayers have not been as fervent as they should be, and I have allowed distractions to get in my way of worshiping You with my whole heart and life. I have often neglected to give You thanks and praise for all the blessings You have lovingly bestowed upon me. I deserve nothing but Your temporal and eternal wrath and punishment. But, I am sorry for my sins and believe in Your Son, Jesus Christ, my Lord, who fulfilled this, and all Your commandments, perfectly. For His sake, have mercy on me and forgive me all my sins. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit, that I may do better, and look not upon my failures, but upon the perfect holiness and righteousness of Your Son, in which I am clothed by faith; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Bible Verses for Meditation on the Second Commandment

Leviticus 19:12

Hebrews 6:16

Numbers 30:2

Matthew 5:37

The Second Commandment in the Divine Liturgy

In the liturgy the company of the baptized *call upon* the name of God, asking for the good things which He Himself as promised:

- *The Confession of Sins:* Our help is in the name of the Lord.
- *The Salutation:* The Lord be with you. And with your spirit.
- *The Collect of the Day:* The Trinitarian termination—through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- *The Prayer of the Church:* We pray in the name of Jesus
- *The Preface and the Sanctus:* We laud and magnify Your glorious name . . . Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
- *The Lord's Prayer:* . . . hallowed be Thy name . . .
- *The Prayer Offices: Matins and Vespers*
- *The Psalms* (including the Introit, Gradual, Verse, and Offertory, which are prayed verses of Holy Scripture)
- *The Canticles:* the Nunc Dimittis, the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and the Te Deum Laudamus

BOOK OF CONCORD ONE-YEAR READING PLAN

Mon: Large Catechism—Longer Preface 1 - 10
Tues: Large Catechism—11 - Shorter Preface 6
Wed: Large Catechism—Summary I 1 - III 28
Thurs: Large Catechism—Part I: Ten Commandments 1 - 15
Fri: Large Catechism—Part I: Ten Commandments 16 - 29

LOOKING FORWARD: THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (Gaudete)

Isaiah 40:1–11; 1 Corinthians 4:1–5; Matthew 11:2–11

John the Baptizer Prepares the Way for the Lord

The voice of the Baptizer cried out in the wilderness: “*Prepare the way of the Lord . . .*” (Isa. 40:1). John called the people to be made ready for the Messiah’s coming through repentance, for “*all flesh is grass*” (Isa. 40:6). Now He asks from prison, “*Are you the one who is to come . . .?*” (Matt. 11:2). Jesus’ works bear witness that He is. The sick are made well; the dead are raised, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. Their iniquity is pardoned; they have received from the Lord’s hand double forgiveness for all their sins. The “*stewards of the mysteries of God*” (1 Cor. 4:1) still deliver Christ’s overflowing forgiveness to the poor in spirit, comforting God’s people with the word of the Gospel which stands forever. This Gospel produces rejoicing among all those who believe.

Collect of the Day

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn of the Day: 344 “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”