

LECTIONARY SUMMARIES

FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

ALL SAINTS' DAY (OBSERVED)

(7 November 2021)

Revelation 7:(2–8) 9–17

1 John 3:1–3

Matthew 5:1–12

Saints Are Blessed in the Eternal Presence of Christ

“A great multitude ... from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,” cry out, “*Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne*” (Rev. 7:9–17). Faith-filled saints from every place and time, with unified voices, eternally magnify the Lamb of God. As His beloved children, we, too, “shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:1–3). Joined with the throng of angels and myriad saints, we shall “serve him day and night in his temple” (Rev. 7:9–17). In our earthly tension vacillating between saint and sinner, faith and doubt, sacred and profane, we earnestly seek Jesus to calm our fears, comfort our spirits and forgive our sins. The Holy Spirit through faith in Christ propels us forward, fortifying us in Word and Sacrament, to our eternal home. In the midst of our constant struggle as believers, we need to be blessed. And so we are. The poor in spirit, the meek, the hungry, the thirsty, the merciful, the pure and the persecuted are all blessed, and we will most certainly inherit the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:1–12).

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (Proper 28B)

(14 November 2021)

Daniel 12:1–3

Hebrews 10:11–25

Mark 13:1–13

The Crucified and Risen Body of Christ Jesus Is the True Temple of God

Despite its “*wonderful stones*” and “*great buildings*,” the Jerusalem temple would be torn down, with not one stone left upon another, just as this present world and its kingdoms will come to an end (Mark 13:1–8). But that temple pointed beyond itself to Christ, to His sacrifice upon the cross and to the resurrection of His body as the true Temple of God. In the midst of sin and death, by the proclamation of the Gospel, He now gathers disciples into His body, wherein “*the one who endures to the end will be saved*” (Mark 13:10–13). For He is “*a great priest over the house of God*,” who “*will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more*.” By the pure water of His Baptism, they “*draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith*,” and by His flesh and blood, they enter the Holy of Holies (Heb. 10:17–22). Thus are His people delivered, “*everyone whose name shall be found written in the book*.” For by the wisdom of His Gospel, He turns “*many to righteousness*,” so that “*many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake*” to everlasting life (Dan. 12:1–3).

LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR (Proper 29B)

(21 November 2021)

Isaiah 51:4–6 or Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14

Jude 20–25 or Revelation 1:4b–8

Mark 13:24–37 or John 18:33–37

In Repentance We Are Alert to the Coming of Christ

The signs of the end are all around us, constant reminders that “*heaven and earth will pass away*.” But all of these signs are centered in the cross of Christ, whereby He has conquered sin and death, that we might be raised with Him in righteousness through His Word of the Gospel, which “*will not pass away*” (Mark 13:31). He is “*the firstborn of the dead*,” who in His great love “*has freed us from our sins by his blood*” (Rev. 1:5). His salvation is certain because “*his dominion is an everlasting dominion*” and His kingdom “*shall not be destroyed*” (Dan. 7:14). For this purpose He came into the world, to reign in love through His voice of the Gospel, which is the truth (John 18:37). So is the righteousness of Christ “*a light to the peoples*,” which “*will never be dismayed*” because it is the justice of His cross and resurrection (Is. 51:4–6). As He “*is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory*,” so wait upon “*the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life*” (Jude 20–24).

THANKSGIVING DAY

(25 November 2021)

Deuteronomy 8:1–10

Philippians 4:6–20 or 1 Timothy 2:1–4

Luke 17:11–19

We Praise God for Sustaining Life in and through His Word

The nation resounds with thanksgiving for the earth’s bountiful harvest, crops of wheat and grains, all beneath the canopy of God’s almighty care. But “*man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD*” (Deut. 8:1–10). The Church is the vessel through which the Word of God penetrates the world with its Law and Gospel. It is this divine Word that proclaims Jesus as the sole source of life, health and wholeness. It is Jesus who heals lepers with His Word: “*Go and show yourselves to the priests*” (Luke 17:11–19). Of the 10 cleansed, only one expresses thanksgiving back to Jesus. But true gratitude proceeds from a heart sustained by faith. Jesus bids this one Samaritan to “*rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.*” So also, we are sent from the Divine Service, bolstered in our faith by baptismal and Eucharist blessings to be thankful in our circumstances of plenty and hunger, abundance and need (Phil. 4:6–20).

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

(28 November 2021)

Jeremiah 33:14–16

1 Thessalonians 3:9–13

Luke 19:28–40 or Luke 21:25–36

The Lord Jesus Comes in Humility to Redeem Us

The season of Advent focuses on the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this first Sunday establishes this theme for the rest of the season. The Son of God came long ago to be our Savior, “*a righteous Branch*” descended from David (Jer. 33:15). As He then came into Jerusalem, riding on a lowly donkey to sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world (Luke 19:28–40), so does He come to His Church today in the humility of Word and Sacrament to deliver the fruits of His Passion: the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. He absolves us and establishes our hearts “*blameless in holiness before our God and Father*” (1 Thess. 3:13). The same Lord Jesus, who came to Jerusalem then and who comes to us now in peace, will come again with power and great glory on the Last Day. Then there will be “*distress of nations in perplexity*,” with “*people fainting with fear*.” Yet, as we anticipate that great and terrible day, He bids us to rest securely in Him: “*Raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near*” (Luke 21:25, 26, 28).