



Sanctus



Christ the King

The lectionary texts for November always lead us to thoughts about the end times and the culmination of history in the glorious reign of Christ. In one sense, the long season of Sundays after Pentecost are bracketed by two feasts which celebrate this reign. The Feast of the Ascension celebrates Christ's "ascension" to the heavenly throne, where he rules as King of kings and Lord of lords. The Feast of Christ the King celebrates that history will culminate in all the cosmos recognizing that indeed Jesus reigns in glory forever and ever.

This theme of the end time spills over into the First Sunday in Advent. The season of Advent, of course, prepares us to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord. But during this season, the church has often spoken of the three comings of Jesus – his birth in human flesh, his presence in bread and wine, and his return to judge the living and the dead. Jesus came as a child; he comes in the Eucharist; he will come again in power and glory. Always in Advent, then, there is the anticipation in liturgy and song of Jesus final return to gather in all people and all history into God's embrace.

In this issue of the *Sanctus* we will take a look at the end time texts of the lectionary and how our preaching may point us to that time of fulfillment. The "Bulletin Clips" will focus on the Sundays of November and December and may be cut and pasted in the Sunday bulletin, one each week during those two months. They come with a permission line for reprinting. *A special thanks to Lauren Smith for the artwork.* There is a page of liturgy helps for planning for Christ the King Sunday.

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New on the Synod web site (www.iksynod.org) are some helps for worship planning. In the last issue of the *Sanctus* we talked about the role of a Worship and Music Committee. There is now a page on the web site that offers some tools for the Committee to craft the weekly (and other) liturgies of the parish. On the home page, click on "Our Ministries"; then click on the "Worship and Preaching" box. On that page, click on the box that says "Worship Planning".

Also new on the web site is a page of published and yet-to-be published ELW resources. After getting to the "Worship and Preaching" page, scroll down and click on the "ELW" box. New and upcoming resources include:

- o Organ Intros and Alternate Accompaniments, Volume 6:
Vocation, Ministry through Hope, Assurance (hymns 574-639)
- o Piano Intros and Alternate Accompaniments, Volume 6:
Vocation, Ministry through Hope, Assurance
- o Gospel Acclamations for Summer/Gospel Acclamation for Autumn
- o Musician's Guide to Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- o Accompaniment Edition for Simplified Keyboard
- o Accompaniment Edition for Guitar



Christ the King



Gathering

The color of the day is white. On feast days it is appropriate to omit the Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness and include an intercession for forgiveness in the Prayers. One might use the Thanksgiving for Baptism on this Sunday.

Possible Gathering Hymns (hymn numbers will be ELW/LBW or ELW/WOV):

430/171, 434/530, 475/172, 660/377, 855/170

The Greeting might be as follows:

Come let us sing to the Lord.

Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

For the Lord is a great God.

And a great king above all gods.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ...

It is appropriate to use the Kyrie, "Worthy Is Christ" is a fitting Canticle of praise.

Word

The readings of the day focus, of course, on the kingship of Christ. The image from Jeremiah 23.1-6 is Jesus as a shepherd king. For the Christian community, the image of shepherd is the Good Shepherd, full of compassion, who lays down his life for the sheep. In Luke 23.33-43, Jesus rules from the cross! Fred Niedner has quipped that we Christians are "nothing more, or less, than a bunch of crucified people hanging around asking, 'What's next? Where do we go from here?'" Jesus and the thief are two dying people making plans for the future!

Verse 3 of Psalm 95 says that the LORD "is a great king above all gods." The original context refers, of course, to Yahweh; but for our community, we see Jesus as the great king. The reading from Paul – Colossians 1.11-20 – picks up on who this Jesus truly is. He is the firstborn of all creation and in him all things were created. He is also the firstborn from the dead and the head of the church, which is his body on earth.

Possibilities for Hymn of the Day would include: 416/179, 431, 432/173, 634/328, 727/421, 637 especially fitting is 502/456 with the image of king and shepherd being mixed, or 838/518 which praises Jesus as King of Creation,

The Nicene Creed is the normal creed for feast days.

After each intercession of The Prayers you might use this bid:

Let us pray to the Lord

Lord, remember us when you come into your kingdom.



Meal

The Peace might be introduced in this way:

In Christ, God was making peace through the blood of his cross.

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

"Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray" is a fitting invitation to the Lord's Prayer.

Possible distribution hymns include: 392/158, 616/740, 620/345, 820/514

Possible sending hymns include: 434/530, 439/744, 855/170

A final blessing might be:

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from the glorious power of Jesus. **Amen.**

May you be prepared to endure everything with patience in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

May you joyfully give thanks to the Father who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. **Amen.**

Almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

An appropriate dismissal might be:

You have been rescued from the power of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of God's beloved Son. Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Preaching November texts

We preach November texts as people of hope. In our culture, movies, books and televangelists frighten us with images of the return of Christ filled with blood and wrath and suffering. Sounds like the crucifixion to me. So much like the crucifixion that the end must be more akin to the "great and promised feast." November preaching (really no different than any preaching) is simply proclaiming that the Christ who returns is the one who was crucified and raised for the life of the world. Our hope rests not in a warrior Christ who defeats our enemies, but in a crucified Christ who in dying and rising has already defeated our one enemy. The following paragraphs are meant to provide a possible entry into the texts of the day, with an eye toward proclaiming that the one who comes a judge of the living and the dead, has already carried our judgment and our sentence to the grave. The crucified one returns with peace, mercy and forgiveness.

November 4, 2007 – All Saints Sunday

Daniel 7.1-3, 15-18; Psalm 149; Ephesians 1.11-23; Luke 6.20-31

The catalog of blessing and woes points to the transitory nature of this life. Hungry folks eventually find food and satisfaction; the satisfied are always hungry later on. No one laughs or weeps forever. Into such a roller coaster way of life Jesus offers a way to live with faith and integrity. But it is not the way of the world: "Love your enemies (Osama bin Laden, et. al.); do good to those who hate you." This is the way of the cross. In his cross, Jesus submits to vagaries of life, even death itself. God raises him from the dead, sets him at the right hand, and puts all things under his feet (Ephesians). In his death and resurrection, Jesus forgives his enemies (all of us), and does good to us by inviting us into his new and endless life (Daniel). There is an inheritance for the people of God. As the saints of God we no longer do battle with a sword in our hand, but God's praise in our throat becomes our sword (Psalm). In the witness to God's kingdom, Jesus (and we his disciples) brings fullness of joy to the world around us and an inheritance which cannot be taken away.

November 11, 2007 – Lectionary 32

Job 19.23-27a; Psalm 17.1-9; 2Thessalonians 2.1-5, 13-17; Luke 20.27-38

In these texts, eschatology is the power for daily living. Jesus, our living Lord, says that God is a god who raises the dead. We are a people of expectation, anticipating this living Lord to come again. We are a thankful people, because God has given us the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the truth which we believe. We are a faithful people, holding fast to the traditions taught us. But holding fast does not mean holding on to Jesus. The tradition we have been taught is to hand him over, to pass him on to the world in every good work and word. And even as we see this Jesus now with the eyes of faith in word and sacrament, in God's holy people, and in the poor and broken of the world, so one day we shall see him with the eyes of flesh on the day of the Lord.

November 18, 2007 – Lectionary 33

Malachi 4.1-2a; Psalm 98; 2Thessalonians 3.6-13; Luke 21.5-19

Malachi and Luke can be passages used to develop a frightening eschatology. The day that is coming is a day of fire and destruction. "Not one stone ... upon another; all will be thrown down." When the walls come tumbling down it becomes an opportunity for some people to make money, for some people to complain, and for Christians to testify. We testify that kingdom rose against kingdom and nation against nation in the crucifixion of Jesus. There all the nations and kingdoms of the world roared against the kingdom of God. The Jesus who was handed over to the nations witnessed to the God of mercy in his crucifixion. What looked like victory for the kingdoms of this world was in fact God winning for all of heaven and all the earth the victory (Psalm). God raised Jesus from death and sent him back as the Sun which scorches away our sins and lights our way, bringing us all into the light and life of the kingdom of God.

November 25, 2007 – Christ the King

Jeremiah 23.1-6; Psalm 46; Colossians 1.11-20; Luke 23.33-36

There it is, plain as day. Jesus rules; he's the king. But, Jesus rules as king from the cross. Jesus wins peace by the shedding of his own blood. There is no other way to have the kingdom of God. But have it we do. We have it because the blood of the cross makes peace with God. We have it because it always comes to us as gift given, not as goal obtained. We have it because it is the "Father's good pleasure" to give it to us. And while eschatology may be about last things, the last things are now, "Today". "Today" salvation came to Zacchaeus' house. "Today" the thief shares paradise with Jesus. "Today" our sins are forgiven and peace with God is won. "Today" Jesus remembers us. We have known and known about all kinds of kings and rulers. We have seen the good and the bad. "Today" we get the best, the Good Shepherd, the image of the invisible God, our 'Beautiful Savior', in whom the fullness of God dwells.

BULLETIN CLIPS



All Saints' Sunday

In recent tradition, the Feast of All Saints' has been celebrated on the first Sunday in November. Originally a feast to celebrate the many saints who had no specific feast day, it is now for us a baptismal feast day that celebrates our death and resurrection to new life in Jesus Christ.

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Martin, Bishop of Tours

Martin Luther was baptized on Martin's feast day in 1483, and so was named after this saint. As bishop, he lived in a cave a couple of miles from the city and used a nearby hut for his office. He was one of the most popular saints in the Middle Ages and is considered the patron saint of France and is one of the most popular saints. His motto was "I do not turn back from work."

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End Times

Lectionary texts in November, leading up to Christ the King Sunday and the First Sunday in Advent, remind us that Christ will come again. They remind us that there will be a culmination to history when God will be all in all. *Reprinted from Sanctus (August 2007). Artwork by Lauren Smith. Used with permission.*



Christ the King

This feast was instituted in 1925 by Pope Pius XI, as a response to the growing secularization of the West. It became popular with Lutherans and many churches were given that name. Amid all the wars and rumors of wars on this earth, God is still in charge and rules through the crucified and risen Christ.

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Advent

The word advent means coming. The season reflects on the three comings of Christ. We prepare to celebrate the first coming as an infant. We long for his return in beauty and power. And we rejoice in his presence among us as we gather at the Eucharist.

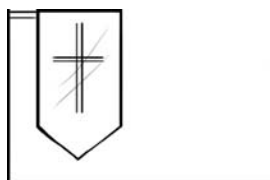
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Advent carols

There are not enough Sundays in the season of Advent to sing all the Advent carols – there are 29 in *ELW*. These carols are rich with biblical imagery of messianic anticipation and the return of Jesus. Enjoy the rich metaphorical language, the striking images, and the biblical vision of God's new day.

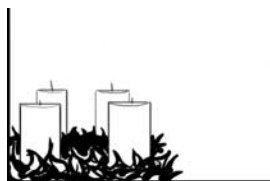
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Advent blue

Advent is the last season to be added to the liturgical year and was originally a 'little Lent'. The color was purple, the mood was penitence, and it was a time of preparation of Epiphany baptisms. Today we celebrate Advent as a season of hope – with blue its color, anticipating the joyous return of Christ our King.

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Advent candles

The Advent wreath marks the countdown till Christmas. The time grows darker (days shorten) as we light more candles. Finally it is Christmas, and the Light of the world enters are darkness. Traditionally, the four Sundays were marked by three purple and one rose colored candle. The rose candle represented the messianic joy proclaimed by the readings of Advent 3. When the color of the season was changed to blue, the suggestion was to use four white candles.

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The Twelve Days of Christmas

The 12 days of Christmas is not just a song, but marks the days from Christmas to Epiphany. The color of all these days is white — the color of joy and celebration. We can hang on to the Christmas spirit by continuing to think of these days as Christmas days, by leaving the tree up, by continuing to enjoy family and friends, and by coming to the Eucharistic feast when it is offered.

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