

# Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

January 28, 2024

## INTROIT

*Psalm 32:1-2, 5-7; Antiphon: Psalm 32:10*

*Many are the sorrows of the wicked,*

but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.

*Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,*

whose sin is covered.

*Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,*

and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

*I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity;*

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"

and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

*Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you*

*at a time when you may be found;*

surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.

*You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble;*

you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning,**

**is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*Many are the sorrows of the wicked,*

but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

**P** *Almighty God, You know we live in the midst of so many dangers that in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

**G** Amen

## GRADUAL

*Psalm 117:1-2a; Psalm 96:8*

*Praise the LORD, all nations!*

Extol him, all peoples!

*For great is his steadfast love toward us,*

and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

*Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;*

bring an offering, and come into his courts!

## RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

**P** *Lord, in Your mercy,*

**G** hear our prayer.

## **Deuteronomy 18:15-20 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup>“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—<sup>16</sup>just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’<sup>17</sup> And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken.’<sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.<sup>19</sup> And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.<sup>20</sup> But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.’

## **1 Corinthians 8:1-13 (ESV)**

Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up.<sup>2</sup> If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.<sup>3</sup> But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.”<sup>5</sup> For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—<sup>6</sup>yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ,

through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

<sup>7</sup> However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.<sup>8</sup> Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.<sup>9</sup> But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.<sup>10</sup> For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols?<sup>11</sup> And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died.<sup>12</sup> Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

## **Mark 1:21-28 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> They went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath [Jesus] entered the synagogue and was teaching.<sup>22</sup> And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.<sup>23</sup> And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out,<sup>24</sup> “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.”<sup>25</sup> But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!”<sup>26</sup> And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a

loud voice, came out of him. <sup>27</sup> And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the

unclean spirits, and they obey him.” <sup>28</sup> And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY<sup>1</sup>

Deuteronomy 18:15–20

1 Corinthians 8:1–13

Mark 1:21–28

### *Our Lord Jesus Christ, True God in the Flesh, Cleanses Our Consciences from Sin*

As He promised, the Lord our God has raised up “*a Prophet*” like Moses, namely Jesus, our brother in the flesh. “*To Him you shall listen,*” because the Word of the Lord is “*in His mouth*” (Deut 18:15–18). Indeed, He is more than a prophet and more than a scribe of the Scriptures; He is the incarnate Word, and He speaks “*a new teaching with authority*” (Mark 1:22, 27). He enters “*the synagogue*” of His Church and provides true Sabbath rest, using His authority to silence and cast out “*even the unclean spirits*” (Mark 1:21–27). By His Word of the Cross He removes the accusations of the law and of the devil, and He cleanses our consciences before God the Father, “*from whom are all things and for whom we exist.*” Hence, we are now set free from bondage and commended to God by the one Lord, Jesus Christ, “*through whom are all things and through whom we exist*” (1 Cor. 8:6). Therefore, use your freedom to care for your brothers and sisters, neither causing them to stumble nor wounding their consciences (1 Cor 8:9–12), but cleansing and strengthening them with the Gospel.

### *Next Week's Readings from God's Word:*

February 4: 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11 (v.5);

1 Corinthians 9:16-27; Mark 1:29-39

## WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

**THE BIBLE** – We believe that EVERY word in the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore the whole Bible is the true, unalterable Word of God, clearly teaching the way of salvation. (2Ti. 3:15-17).

**GOD** – We believe that God is ONE (Dt. 6:4) and that He has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons (Mt. 3:13-17), the Father, our Creator and Preserver; the Son, Jesus, Who is both God and Man, and our only Saviour; the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts and enables us to live a God-pleasing life.

**MAN** – We believe that God created man with body and soul, in His image, but man of his own free will lost this image through sin. (Gn. 1:27; 2:7; 3.)

**SIN** – “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” (1Jn 3:4). There are two kinds of sin: original (inherited) sin (Ps. 51:5) and actual sin (sin in thought, word and deed) (Mt. 15:19). Man is subject to death and eternal damnation by reason of the guilt that attaches to sin.

**REDEMPTION** – We believe that God out of pure love and mercy redeemed mankind from sin through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus, and His resurrection shows that God was satisfied with the work of Christ. (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 2:2; Ro. 4:25).

**FAITH** – We believe that the sinner must personally receive the merits of Jesus for salvation and trust that, “Jesus died for me.” (Jn 17:3; Ja 1:21; Ps. 31:14).

**THE CHURCH** – We believe that the church, established by Christ is the whole number of believers in Christ, for only believers are members of the church. Jesus Christ is its one and only foundation (Ep. 2:19-22). The church is found wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution.

**SACRAMENTS** – We believe that Christ instituted two sacraments, and when Baptism is administered to infants and adults, according to the command of Christ, God offers His grace and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16). In the Lord’s Supper communicants receive in, with and under the bread and wine also Christ’s body and blood. Communicants believing this word of promise receive this for the forgiveness of sins (1Co. 11:24-25).

**SECOND COMING OF CHRIST** – We believe that Christ will return visibly to earth (Acts 1:11) on the Last Day (Mk. 13:32) to judge the world (Acts 10:42). The believers will go to heaven, to be with God forever (1Th. 4:13-18). The unbelievers will go to hell, eternally separated from God (Mt. 25:32, 46).

**RESURRECTION** – We believe that on the Last Day believers in Christ will rise from the dead, their souls reunited with their earthly bodies and glorified by Christ (Jn 14:19; 17:24).