

First Sunday of Advent Sunday, December 02, 2018 Year C

The Collect: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Jeremiah 33:14-16 read from the Message Bible

“Watch for this: The time is coming’—God’s Decree—‘when I will keep the promise I made to the families of Israel and Judah. When that time comes, I will make a fresh and true shoot sprout from the David-Tree. He will run this country honestly and fairly. He will set things right. That’s when Judah will be secure and Jerusalem live in safety. The motto for the city will be, “God Has Set Things Right for Us.”

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 25:1-10 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my trust in you; * let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

2 Let none who look to you be put to shame; * let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.

3 Show me your ways, O Lord, * and teach me your paths.

4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, * for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

5 Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love, * for they are from everlasting.

6 Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; * remember me according to your love and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.

7 Gracious and upright is the Lord; * therefore he teaches sinners in his way.

8 He guides the humble in doing right * and teaches his way to the lowly.

9 All the paths of the Lord are love and faithfulness * to those who keep his covenant and his

testimonies.

10 For your Name's sake, O Lord, * forgive my sin, for it is great.

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 read from the Modern English Version Bible

For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sakes before our God, night and day praying earnestly that we might see your face and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all men, even as we do for you. To this end may He establish your hearts to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Luke 21:25-36 read from the New American Standard Bible

“There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Then He told them a parable: “Behold the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

“Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; for it will come

upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord

**Closing Prayer: On December 6th we celebrate the life of Nicholas, Bishop of Myra
Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses* and other sources.**

Very little is known about the life of Nicholas, except that he suffered an imprisonment during the persecution of the Emperor Diocletian. It is possible that he was one of the bishops attending the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325. He was honored as a saint in Constantinople in the sixth century by the Emperor Justinian. His veneration became immensely popular in the West after the supposed removal of his body to Bari, Italy, in the late eleventh century. In England, almost 400 churches were dedicated to him.

He became Bishop of Myra in the fourth century, and there are many stories of his love for God and for his neighbor. The best-known story involves a man with three unmarried daughters, and not enough money to provide them with suitable dowries. This meant that they could not marry, and were likely to end up as prostitutes. Nicholas walked by the man's house on three successive nights, and each time threw a bag of gold in through a window (or, when the story came to be told in colder climates, down the chimney). Thus, the daughters were saved from a life of shame, and all got married and lived happily ever after. Because of this and similar stories, Nicholas became a symbol of anonymous gift-giving. Hence, if we give a gift to someone today without saying whom it is from, it can be called "a present from Saint Nicholas (or Santa Claus)."

Nicholas is also famed as the traditional patron of seafarers and sailors, and, more especially, of children. As a bearer of gifts to children, his name was brought to America by the Dutch colonists in New York.

Let us pray: Almighty God, who in your love gave to your servant Nicholas of Myra a

perpetual name for deeds of kindness on land and sea: Grant, we pray, that your Church may never cease to work for the happiness of children, the safety of sailors, the relief of the poor, and the help of those tossed by tempests of doubt or grief; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**