

The First Sunday of Advent (2020)

Holy Spirit, Light Divine: Shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away; turn the darkness into day;
Let me see my Savior's face; let me all His beauties trace;
Show those glorious truths to me which are only known to
Thee. Amen.

Mark 11:1–10 “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’”

In the Name of Jesus.

The Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther bids us to celebrate the opening of each Day—ANY moment of MOMENT!—with the words given by our Lord. Saint Mark has it, ‘He who believes and is baptized shall be saved!’ Thus, BATHING our ‘believing’—whatever THAT is!—within HIS washing: no DOUBT about what THAT is!

As each Lord’s Day unfolds in the liturgy of the Christian Church. Saint Matthew has it: ‘In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’ Beee-cause....my dear ones:

Jesus Christ HAS...ALREADY: DONE-AND-DONE!...

Your God-in-Man-for-certain has done away with EVERY gap there could be between Real God and each man. That's the gladness that comes with the repetition of 'immediately' on the Day Christ rode on in Heaven's majesty: lowly, on a donkey, with nothing now between Him....and oppression and humility and the cross AND YOU! And me; and every creature! "Preach this Good News to ever creature!"

Slow down with me, my friends. 'Preach MY Gospel to EVERY creature!' AS...IF!

As IF it is THAT SIMPLE! 'Well, we'll just go up to every creature and speak of God and man in happy union now: God serving man, as a Man, come not to BE served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.'

Our WORDS and DEEDS and LOOKS and RE...ACTIONS—in harmony with the washing with which WE have been washed—ALL what's US now will just be OOZING with Good Cheer for every last of the six billion plus of us dear creatures—and our little dogs, too!

Christians! Why NOT?! There is nothing on HIS SIDE that stands in the way! Because of His ‘immediacy.’

Oh, my dearly beloved: this is your poor pastor’s strength, if he has one; and his weakness. I read that word ‘immediately’ and see it twice in one reading, and I’m hooked. I beg you to bear with me, fish on the line.

Half the occurrences of this word in the New Testament are in the Gospel According to Saint Mark. There’s a DOZEN of ‘em in the first chapter alone! ‘Immediately!’ Two things.

One: this ‘immediately’ has NOTHING to do with ‘suddenness,’ and ‘fright’ or ‘surprise.’ Actually, somewhat the opposite! Not surprise, but—promised and waited for and expected! Not ‘sudden,’ but, ‘at last!’ Not ‘fright,’ but Jesus.

And another thing: sometimes, something is lost when we ‘update’ our Bible translations. How to keep the baby and throw out the old water?

‘Make STRAIGHT the way of the Lord!’ is the cry from Isaiah through the Baptizer—and then, at last, OF COURSE!, the Son of God!

And the translation King James of England gets the credit for reveals to us dear, dear men who knew what's what in the original and translated OUR 'immediately' as 'STRAIGHTWAY!'

Now. Bask; enjoy; hear; believe it all! The Spirit of Jesus tells us NOTHING is beyond HIM when it comes to making all our sad things come untrue!

Mark 1:10

¹⁰ * And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens ^{||}opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

¹² And immediately ⁱthe Spirit ^kdriveth him into the wilderness. ¹

Mark 1:18

¹⁸ And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

* A.D. 27.

^{||} Or, *cloven*, or, *rent*. Gk. not as Acts 2:3.

ⁱ Ver. 12, 13, Matt. 4:1–11. Luke 4:1–13.

^k Gk. as ver. 43. Matt. 9:38. John 10:4.

¹ [The Holy Bible: King James Version](#). (2009). (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Mk 1:12). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

Mark 1:20

²⁰ And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

Mark 1:21

²¹ * And ^qthey went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered ^rinto the synagogue, and taught.

Mark 3:6

⁶ And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with ^dthe Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.²

There's two of 'em in today's blooming. And there's two, most sobering, and last occurrences in the Gospel According to Saint Mark.

⁷² ^s And the second time the cock crew. [*King James should-a docked them an hour's pay here! Left out the second-last one, which newer versions put in. 'IMMEDIATELY,' 'STRAIGHTWAY,' the cock crowed.*] And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him,

* A.D. 31.

^q Matt. 4:13. To ver. 28, Luke 4:31–37.

^r ver. 39. See Matt. 4:23.

^d See Matt. 22:16.

² [The Holy Bible: King James Version](#). (2009). (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Mk 1:10–3:6). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

^s See ver. 30.

Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And^{||} when he thought thereon, he wept.

15 And ^astraightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole ^bcouncil, and bound Jesus, and ^ccarried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.³

What do we see? Most important: a few fellas who refused to listen to the Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther! The FIRST thing you do when you rise is NOT get together with your religious buddies and tattle to the most IRRELIGIOUS about a loose cannon in town telling all men that heaven is now come to earth and everything is set straight!

Second: what to say about Peter.

Well, being a Lutheran really helps! Just keep reading until you run across his name again!

^{||} Or, *he wept abundantly*, or, *he began to weep*.

^a Matt. 27:1. Luke 22:66.

^b See Matt. 5:22.

^c Luke 23:1. John 18:28.

³ [*The Holy Bible: King James Version*](#). (2009). (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Mk 14:72–15:1). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶ And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.”⁴

Now, THAT’S a fella who listens. Not only what OUR baptism is all about: He has risen and so, immediately, straightway, so are y’all!

But happily: Peter denied on oath that HE belongs with Jesus; then tears. Jesus does NOT deny that HE belongs with Peter. So wipe his tears away. And if Peter, then every creature!

Y’all see why I urge you to use that dirty paper they thrown on your lawn every day mostly just to line the bird cage? Why I plead with you to free YOURSELF from those little people stuck in the boxes in our homes: their heads, blabbing and yakking and raising fear and doubt? If we ALL turn them off, the Lord will free them from those boxes!

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mk 16:4–7). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Your King is no king this world wants. Your God is no god men have it in them to love.

YOUR Lover on High will bear NO gap between Him and you! So, my dear ones: confess the GAPS! HE knows what to do with them!

WHERE we have been absent, denying, less than OOZING with pardon for every creature: HE gets straight to every creature, even where we hesitate. Confessing the gaps you invent, and your pastor filling in those gaps with pardon from heaven on earth: why else was I created?

WHEN we make the Gospel and Holy Baptism last and least in our day: the ONLY thing that heaven observes!—

Yet He has his time—often!—to give us His Bread to eat with His Body, His Wine to drink with His Blood.

‘Tell His disciples about THEIR rising! His too! Even Peter.’

Straightway, nothing in between, immediately God with us men, every creature, even me, even you in the Name of Jesus.