

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

January 29, 2012



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

AS WE GATHER

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 conscience (1 Cor 8:9-12), but cleansing and strengthening them with the Gospel.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

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.

Deuteronomy 18:15-20 (God promises a prophet like Moses.)

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. {16} For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die." {17} The LORD said to me: "What they say is good. {18} I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. {19} If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account. {20} But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death."

1 Corinthians 8:1-13 (Caring about a friend's conscience.)

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. {2} The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. {3} But the man who loves God

is known by God. {4} So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. {5} For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), {6} yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. {7} But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. {8} But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. {9} Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. {10} For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? {11} So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. {12} When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. {13} Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

Mark 1:21-38 (Jesus commands an unclean spirit to leave a man.)

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. {22} The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. {23} Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, {24} "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God!" {25} "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" {26} The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. {27} The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching--and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him." {28} News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee. {29} As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. {30} Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. {31} So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. {32} That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. {33} The whole town gathered at the door, {34} and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was. {35} Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. {36} Simon and his companions went to look for him, {37} and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" {38} Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else--to the nearby villages--so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."

All scripture quotations from NIV Publishing House 1973

EPIPHANY FOUR

Order of Service

*LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK
DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING ONE*

PRELUDE

HYMN p. 533
"Jesus Has Come and Brings Pleasure"

† **LITURGY** p. 151

† **HYMN OF PRAISE** p. 154

† COLLECT OF THE DAY

OLD TESTAMENT Deuteronomy 18:15-20

EPISTLE 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

† **VERSE** p. 156

† **GOSPEL** Mark 1:21-28

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY p. 842
"Son of God, Eternal Savior"

SERMON

† **NICENE CREED** p. 158

† **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH** p. 159

COMMISSIONING OF HOLLY BORRASSO

OFFERING

† **OFFERTORY** p. 159

† **COMMUNION LITURGY** p. 160

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"I Want to Walk as a Child" p. 411

"O Morning Star, How Fair & Bright" p. 395

"The People That in Darkness Sat" p. 412

† **POST COMMUNION CANTICLE** p. 164
Thank the Lord...

† BENEDICTION

RECOGNITION OF NANCY BOWMAN

† **CLOSING HYMN** p.656
"A Mighty Fortress"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE