

The First Sunday in Advent

Ad Te Levavi · Middle School · Student Edition

For the student: Read along, fill in the blanks, and write your answers on the lines. Your parent has the answers.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

Most collects follow a five-part pattern: the **address** (the One to whom we pray), the **reason** (what God has done or promised), the **petition** (what we ask), the **purpose** (what we hope will result), and the **ending** (the closing that names the Trinity).

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

1. Mark each part of the collect. Which of the five parts is missing?

2. To which Person of the Trinity is this collect addressed? How can you tell?

3. From what does the collect ask to be rescued?

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Read the Gospel on your own.

Matthew 21:1-9

1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, **2** saying to them, "Go into the village in front

of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. **3** If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." **4** This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, **5** "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. **7** They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. **8** Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. **9** And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

- 1.** Why did Jesus ride a donkey instead of a war horse? Look at verses 4 and 5.

- 2.** Verse 4 says, "This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet." What does that tell you about Jesus?

- 3.** "Hosanna" comes from Psalm 118:25 and means "Save us, we pray." Many in the crowd hoped for a king who would drive out the Romans. What kind of saving had Jesus come to do?

- 4.** Why did the crowd spread cloaks and branches on the road?

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

1. Find at least two places where the collect's words appear in the Gospel. Explain each one.

2. The collect asks for Jesus' *power*, yet He comes "humble, and mounted on a donkey." How can humble also be powerful?

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Second Petition. Thy kingdom come. **What does this mean?** The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also. **How does God's kingdom come?** God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

Cross-reference. "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1:13-14)

1. Luther says God's kingdom comes "by itself without our prayer." Where do you see that in the Gospel?

2. If the kingdom comes anyway, why do we pray for it?

3. Which word in Colossians 1:13 also appears in the collect? What does Colossians say we are delivered from, and into what?

Think about it. Why do we hear this Palm Sunday story at the start of Advent, a month before Christmas? Hint: Advent means "coming."

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

1. Write a short Advent collect of your own. Use all five parts.

Pray today's collect together. Then answer:

2. What does Jesus do for you when He comes?
