



Grace and Peace from God our Father and from Our Lord Jesus Christ.

When my wife came to me asking about creating an Advent Calendar for our homeschool community at the time, I had one idea pop into my mind: base the calendar off Part 1 of Handel's Messiah. Messiah is one of the great pieces of religious Western Music, along with Bach's St. Matthew's Passion. This became a labor of love.

Each day's verse represents one aria, recitative, or chorus in Part 1. I suggest reading the verse and listening to the given aria, recitative, or chorus as part of your daily devotions. You can find full recordings and the various parts on YouTube (see links for each day). The proper number for the given verse is listed on your calendar. (For instance, search "Handel Messiah no 2" to bring up the recitative Comfort ye my people.) Also note that numbers 1 and 13 are instrumental movements. Handel was one of the finest composers, and listening to his instrumental pieces are well worth your time. Also note that on Sundays, the traditional prayer for that Sunday in Advent is used. These prayers come from the propers used by the Western Church for over 1000 years. This is to allow for prayers to be added, and allows for make up days. I would encourage you to pray the given prayer throughout the week.

There are 19 arias, recitatives, and choruses in Part 1. I suggest starting from December 23rd and counting backwards 19 days minus Sundays. For instance, in 2021, counting back starting on December 23rd would mean you would start listening to No 2 (Comfort ye my people) on December 1st. If you wanted to listen to the two instrumental pieces, you would start on November 29th. If you wanted to celebrate all the Saints days and commemorations, you would start on November 27th or November 25th, depending on whether you want to listen to the instrumental parts separately. This has been done to allow flexibility from year to year, as Advent does not have a set number of days, unlike Lent.

I have also included additional resources with readings and suggested hymns. On Saints Days, the readings are taken from the Historic Lectionary, as many of these days do not have readings assigned in the Lutheran Service Book. My general source for these readings is the Daily Divine Service Book, which was put together by Pr. H.R. Curtis.

The readings added after Christmas are suggestions based off the Sacredotal Calendar. If you have some other lectionary for readings you wish to use, you are free to do it.

This is not meant to replace your current devotional life, but add one more element to it. Music can be a tool, and in this case, a tool that can aid in the memorization of many Bible passages pertaining to Jesus and his coming.

I pray this will be a blessing to you and your Family.

Daniel Sellers
St. Luke, A+D 2021