

### **Mark 1: 1-8**

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way. A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Today we meet John the Baptist, on the banks of the River Jordan, he commences his mission with the resounding cry Prepare a way for the Lord, and make his paths straight! John the Baptist did not hesitate to call on the Jews to prepare a way for the Lord and make his road straight. John, set an example and prepared a way for Jesus by calling people to repentance and baptising them as a sign of their repentance.

This Advent I am being called to prepare the way of the Lord by making my path smooth and straight so that my road which leads to God may be a road of justice, freedom and repentance.

Do I hear this call? How am I responding?

#### ***Prayer over the Offerings***

*Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings, and, since we have no merits to plead our cause, come, we pray, to our rescue with the protection of your mercy.*

#### ***Prayer after Communion***

*Replenished by the food of spiritual nourishment, we humbly beseech you, O Lord, that, through our partaking in this mystery, you may teach us to judge wisely the things of earth and hold firm to the things of heaven.*

## ***Second Sunday of Advent*** ***Year B***

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

***The Lord Is Come: He Is Here!***



In our magnificent first reading today from the prophet Isaiah, which is echoed in the words of John the Baptist in the Gospel, a voice cries out: Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low. Advent is a great time for us to clear the ground, to make level the path, so as to facilitate the work and action of God in our lives. The readings of today offer us an invitation to be like road workers, constantly preparing a way for the Lord.

#### ***Opening Prayer***

*Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company.*

### **Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11**

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together.

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain.

You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

In today's first reading the prophet Isaiah highlights the importance of good roads and interprets it in the light of the spiritual experience of his people. He brings a message of consolation to them announcing the end of their sufferings at the coming of the Messiah. But the crooked way must be made straight, hills must be filled and mountains made low for the Messiah to enter and his glory revealed.

In today's world networks of roads are built to make communication and exchange easy, fast and safe. This Advent, how am I building roads within myself which lead to a deeper relationship with God and concern for my friends, family and neighbours?

### **Psalm 84**

*I will hear what the Lord God has to say, a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people. His help is near for those who fear and his glory will dwell in our land.*

*Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven.*

*The Lord will make us prosper and our earth shall yield its fruit.  
Justice shall march before him and peace shall follow his steps*

### **2 Peter 3: 8-14**

Do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

The second reading concerns itself with a problem that was constant with the early Christian community - the timing of the second coming of the Lord. Peter's advice is to concentrate on the present; this way the future will take care of itself however long or short the time may be! Peter encourages us to live in holiness and righteousness; living in this way will straighten the road within us. Since this present age will dissolve, may we be found spotless and unblemished when the Lord comes. Peter describes a life of harmony, repaying evil with blessing, doing good regardless of the consequences, living a life completely immersed in the Holy Spirit.

As I journey this Advent am I travelling on the road that will lead me to inner freedom and truth?

What am I looking for as I journey? Who are my companions?

*Alleluia, Alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!*