



## 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**See I am sending my messenger ahead of you. Who will prepare your way  
The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'**

### PRAYER

Gracious God, you come to restore us to new life with you and one another. Help us to be open to every opportunity to prepare a way for you. For within and around us a voice cries to make a way for you. Help us to respond so that we can restore this new life that you offer to us and all. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

### With Mary we pray

Hail Mary ...

### READING

People can take it in turns to read the Gospel, or else if someone is praying on his/her own, then s/he can read the Gospel a number of times. This should be followed by a time of reflective silence.

**First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11**

**Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14**

### Read the Text

#### **A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark 1:1-8**

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: *'Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight'* and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All

Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, *'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'*

### WORDS/PHRASES

Suggest that each person says a word or a phrase which stayed with them from the reading (*with no comment from anyone else*)

### REFLECTION

Today we are introduced to John the Baptist. He is the one who prepared the people for the coming of Jesus. Many listened to him, many did not. Would you go to listen to him today? Would you allow your children to go and listen to him?

Are we ready to listen to the truth?

The truth about ourselves?

The truth about the world around us?

Are we ready to change our lives because that is what John the Baptist would ask of us! So, what is he asking of us personally now? Are we afraid to listen?

Yet, we are so willing to celebrate Christmas. To prepare our homes, our shops, our public spaces. We can't wait to get our trees etc up at the beginning of Advent. But which of us really wants to prepare by listening to John the Baptist, and the Christmas hopes he expresses in the name of God ie the hope that we might change our style of living?

John recognizes who Jesus is, and how powerful he is. Do we really believe him? Would we really be willing to go and listen to John the Baptist if we heard that he had returned again?

Lord, help us to listen to the words of John the Baptist, *'to prepare a way for the Lord*

*and to make his paths straight'* Help us to understand what that means for our lives. Help us, like John the Baptist, to lead others to you, by what we say and do.  
***Allow for a period of five to ten minutes' silence***

**PRAYER**

**Response: Come Lord Jesus**

May we help to restore a sense of hope and freedom to all who have felt alone and abandoned at this time.

**Come Lord Jesus**

You come as the radiant reflection of God's love. Help us to be prayerful and reflective, man and woman, before we take steps of action for the sake of justice.

**Come Lord Jesus**

Help us to show care for one another, our environment and all endangered species.

**Come Lord Jesus**

May we be ready to share our gifts freely and willingly in a manner that gives dignity to the poor.

**Come Lord Jesus**

Give peace and eternal rest to all who have died today. Be with those who miss them and are grieving.

**Come Lord Jesus**

**FINAL THOUGHT**

What part of my life is John the Baptist challenging me about? How do I answer his radical call to change my way of life?