PATHWAYS IN ADVENT

Third Sunday of Advent



Pathway:
The Church as a Place of Healing

Process

Opening Prayer

Say the opening prayer together

Gracious God, we wait for you in hope.
As we walk the Advent pathway,
may we be alert to the wonders of your deeds
and the signs of your presence in our world.
Open our hearts and minds to hear and share the
message of hope, joy, peace, reconciliation and love
as we await your coming and respond to our
Baptismal call to live the Gospel in our daily lives.
We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

Proclaim the Gospel

Read the Gospel passage aloud slowly. Pause.
Re-read the passage, noticing what is striking you as you hear the words of the Gospel

Reflect and Share

Pause for a time of silence to listen to what God is saying to you in this Gospel text
In turn, each person shares what stays with them
Listen to one another without interruption
Pause before hearing from the next person, in order to receive what has been shared

Response after each person shares

ALL: Your word, O Lord, is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.

(Psalm 118:105)

Gospel Text

John 1:6-8, 19-28

A man came, sent by God.
His name was John. He came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light, so that
everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light, only a witness to
speak for the light.
This is how John appeared as a witness.
When the Jews sent priests and Levites
from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'
he not only declared, but he declared quite
openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,'
they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he
said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered,
'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We
must take back an answer to those who
sent us. What have you to say about
yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah
prophesied: a voice that cries in the
wilderness: make a straight way for the
Lord.'
Now these men had been sent by the
Pharisees, and they put this further
question to him, 'Why are you baptizing if
you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and
not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptize
with water; but there stands among you –
unknown to you – the one who is coming
after me; and I am not fit to undo his
sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on
the far side of the Jordan, where John was
baptizing.



Kildare and Leighlin
Diocesan Commission for Liturgical Formation

Read and Reflect on the Pathway

The following quotes are taken from the Irish Synodal Assembly working document, October 2026, 'Is not this what God asks of you?' Micah 6:8

"The Church that seeks to be a place of healing must be at the service of Christ who heals, offers new life, and liberates from the bonds that continue to imprison and burden those who have been hurt."

"Now we dare to hope of a Church capable of transforming the spiritual landscape of our culture through authentic witness, service, and joyful proclamation of the Gospel."

For the Church that seeks to be a place of healing, our common Baptism reminds us that, in Christ, we are entrusted to each other. When we recognise one another as brothers and sisters, and walk with and listen to one another, including those whose courageous truth-telling confronts us with the harm caused within the Church, we foster authentic relationships and shared responsibility in the Body of Christ.It then becomes a sacred duty to seek forgiveness, to work for healing, and to rebuild trust. To walk this path as brothers and sisters in not merely a spiritual exercise – it is an act of justice.

From the Working Document
Pathway 3: The Church as a place of healing

Reflect and Share

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.
Prayerfully consider these quotes.
Notice what draws you, where you see something of the Gospel, where the Spirit might be inviting us/you to change, deepen or begin again in the light of this pathway.
Listen to one another without interruption, pausing briefly before moving on to the next person.

Respond in Action

Entrusted to each other in baptism, how can I and others in my parish work to make straight the path and grow as a listening, truthful, healing and servant community?

Prayer of Intercession

May we recognise one another as brothers and sisters, listen to one another and encourage one another to speak the truth in love, so all may find healing.
R. Is not this what God asks of us?

Concluding Prayer

Say the closing prayer together

Loving God,
we give praise and thanks
that you have sent your Son to be
our light in the darkness of this world.
As we await your coming, help us to be
a Church that proclaims the gospel,
a Church of welcome and belonging,
a Church where the wounded find a place of healing,
a Church that accompanies one another
and a Church that empowers each of us
to be ministers of your gospel.
May your Word be a lamp for our feet
and a light for our path.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.
Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus.

Learn more about the Synodal Pathways at www.synod.ie or

SCAN ME