

Living FAITH

*We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land
and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*

2nd Sunday of Advent – Year A Secondary

“Prepare The Way”

WE GATHER

God of Joy;
As we enter this Advent season,
help keep our advent flames of hope, love,
joy and peace burning bright.
Help us prepare our hearts in readiness for
the coming of a humble peacemaker,
sent to heal and free the world.
We make this prayer in Jesus’ name.

Amen

WE LISTEN

A reading from Mark (1:1-8)

The Preaching of John the Baptist

This is the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It began just as God had said in the book written by Isaiah the prophet,

*“I am sending my messenger to get the way ready for you. In the desert someone is shouting,
'Get the road ready for the Lord! Make a straight path for him.'”*

So John the Baptist showed up in the desert and told everyone, “Turn back to God and be baptized!
Then your sins will be forgiven.”

From all Judea and Jerusalem crowds of people went to John. They told how sorry they were for their
sins, and he baptized them in the Jordan River.

John wore clothes made of camel’s hair. He had a leather strap around his waist and ate grasshoppers
and wild honey.

John also told the people, “Someone more powerful is going to come. And I am
not good enough even to stoop down and untie his sandals. I baptize you
with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.



For hope:
That advent may be a season of renewed *hope*
for all who have been feeling hopeless.
Lord, hear us.

For love:
That advent may be a reminder to
share the *love* of Jesus to all.
Lord, hear us.

For joy:
That all anxiety and sadness be replaced
with the *joyful* spirit of advent.

For peace:
That communities and families in conflict use this
advent season to come together in *peace* and
harmony.
Lord, hear us.

For our own needs...
Lord, hear us.

WE REFLECT

There are so many symbols for Christmas. Santa's workshops in the stores, Christmas Trees, coloured lights, carols and of course presents. Even the endless line up for Christmas movies on streaming platforms let us know that the Christmas season has started. But all of these symbols are just temporary. As soon as Christmas is over, they get cleaned up and packed away for next year. They are important though. These symbols help us to really experience Christmas. They are what Christmas sounds like, what it tastes, smells, looks and feels like. But the Spirit of Christmas is something entirely different. It's not just the spirit of giving or Christmas miracles that the movies focus on. The Spirit of Christmas is what John the Baptist is talking about: Jesus. John baptises with symbols, like water that you can see, taste, smell, touch and hear, but Jesus... Jesus baptises with the Holy Spirit. Jesus fills us and the world with hope, faith, joy, love and peace that is **everlasting**. We might just need to try a little harder to notice the presence of the Holy Spirit but it's always there. What's most important, is that the Holy Spirit isn't packed away after New Year's until next year with the rest of the Christmas symbols, it remains. So, we can experience and share the Holy Spirit all year round.

This Advent season you are called to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. So, as you begin decorating your house, Christmas shopping and eating candy canes and Christmas cake, don't forget to make some space for the true Spirit of Christmas and the hope, faith, love, joy and peace the Holy Spirit brings.

WE ARE SENT FORTH

Jesus,
Thank you for reminding us that the most important part of Christmas is spreading hope, joy, love and peace.
In the busyness of Christmas,
help us to prepare the way for Your Spirit.
We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, Son of the Living God.
Amen.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

"It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open doors of hope."

- Pope Benedict XVI