

The Living Word

Third Sunday of Advent, Year A

11 December 2022

First Reading Is 35:1-6, 10

God himself will come and save us.

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult,
let the wasteland rejoice and bloom,
let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil,
let it rejoice and sing for joy.

The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it,
the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;
they shall see the glory of the Lord,
the splendour of our God.

Strengthen all weary hands,
steady all trembling knees
and say to all faint hearts,
'Courage! Do not be afraid.

'Look, your God is coming,
vengeance is coming,
the retribution of God;
he is coming to save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
the ears of the deaf unsealed,
then the lame shall leap like a deer
and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy,
for those the Lord has ransomed shall return.
They will come to Zion shouting for joy,
everlasting joy on their faces;
joy and gladness will go with them
and sorrow and lament be ended.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 145:6-10. R. see Is 35:4

(R.) Lord, come and save us.

or

(R.) Alleluia!

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. (R.)

2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. (R.)

3. It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. (R.)

Second Reading Jas 5:7-10

You also must be patient; do not lose heart, the Lord's coming will be soon.

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;

he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Alleluia!



Gospel Mt 11:2-11

Are you the one who is to come, or must we wait for someone else?

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

Reflection by Greg Sunter

Why would John the Baptist send messengers to question Jesus? We recall from last week's gospel passage that John had a somewhat 'fire and brimstone' perception of what Jesus would be like. Perhaps as he sat in his prison cell John began to wonder whether Jesus was indeed the Messiah that John believed him to be. Perhaps the question was not for himself but rather for his disciples that he sent to Jesus. Given the answer that Jesus provided them, perhaps John's intention was for the disciples to recognise that Jesus was in fact the one that John had proclaimed and that the disciples should switch their allegiance to Jesus. John probably guessed that he would not be leaving that prison alive and may have been leading his disciples to the next step in their discipleship by having them go and scrutinise Jesus.

The indirect answer that Jesus provides to the query would have not sounded like such a roundabout response as it does to us. The picture Jesus describes of the blind seeing, the lame walking, lepers cleansed, and the deaf hearing would have been very familiar to those who were listening and the first audience of this gospel. These were signs of the coming of the Messiah that had been foretold by the prophets. In his answer, Jesus effectively says, 'Well, all the things that are supposed to happen when the Messiah comes are happening now with me. There's your answer!'

The reading continues to build on the Advent themes of anticipation, preparedness and hope. As we draw closer to the celebration of the Nativity, in this reading is confirmation that our hope is not misplaced. Today's readings emphasise the joy that lies in the anticipation and expectation of what is coming.

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Trinity Aid for Refugees will be recommending grocery collections in January 2023, starting with Barwon Heads then rotating monthly across our Parish. Thank you to our generous supporters this year. If you would like to support the Refugee Families in Geelong through December you could donate online to Wesley Church Welcome Place BSB 633 000 Account: 160 305 066. Or contact Shirley 0409 424 243 or email shirleyhurley@inet.net.au.

TAR Catholic Social Justice Corner (weekly update): From 'Message of Pope John Paul II': Alice Springs 29/11/1986. "Do you perhaps remember those words that Paul VI spoke to the aboriginal people during his visit to them in 1970? On that occasion he said: "We know that you have a lifestyle proper to your own ethnic genius or culture – a culture which the Church respects and which she does not in any way ask you to renounce... Society itself is enriched by the presence of different cultural and ethnic elements. For us you and the values you represent are precious. We deeply respect your dignity and reiterate our deep affection for you."

Thank you to the children who put up the crib at Ocean Grove Church. You did a wonderful job, well done.

St Bernard's Belmont Parish is recruiting 2 staff members to join its team: Pastoral Worker and Administrative Officer. Do you know someone who is interested in undertaking one of the roles above? If so, please let them know. Job descriptions: www.melbournecatholic.org/job-vacancies

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LITURGY IN OUR PARISH THIS WEEK

Monday 12th December – Our Lady of Guadalupe (Memorial)

Tuesday 13th December – St Lucy (Memorial)

9:15am Mass at Our Lady Star of the Sea, Ocean Grove

11:00am Mass and Anointing at Sea Views Manor, Ocean Grove

Wednesday 14th December – St John of the Cross (Memorial)

9:15am Mass at Holy Trinity, Queenscliff

11:00am Mass and Anointing at Arcare, Point Lonsdale

Thursday 15th December – Thursday of the 3rd week of Advent

9:15am Mass at Our Lady Star of the Sea, Ocean Grove

Friday 16th December – Friday of the 3rd week of Advent

9:15am Mass at Holy Trinity, Queenscliff

Saturday 17th December – Saturday of the 3rd week of Advent

Sunday 18th December – FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT

This weekend, we light the Third Advent candle – the candle of Joy.

This Sunday is known as Gaudete Sunday, which comes from the entrance Antiphon:

*Gaudete in Dómino sempre: iterum dico, gaudete...
Dóminus enim prope est.*

Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone.

*The Lord is near.
(Philippians 4: 4-5)*

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Thought for the Week:

Sometimes your only available transportation is a leap of faith.

- Margaret Shepard.



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Estia Health Leopold is a Residential Aged Care home and has availability for respite and permanent vacancies and with **50% of their respite fees for December and January**. Call Gabrielle on 0416 336 841 if you would like to have a look at our wonderful home and find out more details on respite care. **52 Ash Road, Leopold. Ph: 5250 2156.**

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