

livingtheword

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Hearing and Living the Sunday Readings

Third Sunday of Advent

Reading 1 [Is 35:1-6a, 10](#)

The desert and the parched land will exult;
the grasslands will rejoice and bloom.
They will bloom with abundant flowers,
and rejoice with joyful song.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to them,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of the LORD,
the splendor of our God.
Strengthen the hands that are feeble,
make firm the knees that are weak,
say to those whose hearts are frightened:
Be strong, fear not!
Here is your God,
he comes with vindication;
with divine recompense
he comes to save you.
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
the ears of the deaf be cleared;
then will the lame leap like a stag,
then the tongue of the mute will sing.

Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return
and enter Zion singing,
crowned with everlasting joy;
they will meet with joy and gladness,
sorrow and mourning will flee.

Reading 2 [Jas 5:7-10](#)

Be patient, brothers and sisters,
until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits
for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it
until it receives the early and the late rains. You too

Reflection Process / Questions

- **10 mins Reading** - underline a word or idea that strikes you
- **10 mins Writing** - write what you have heard, write your response to a reflection question(s) that attracts your attention
- **10 mins Sharing / Praying** - share with a friend or pray to God about livingtheword you have heard.
- **Advent Story. The Master and the Puppy.** [C.S. Lewis](#). Imagine you were God and you had a puppy. You wanted to show your puppy you loved it completely. How would you show your love? You would feed it, take it for a walk, cuddle it, let it come inside..... But would you consider an extreme love? How about completely taking on the condition of being a 'puppy' with all the self emptying it involves? This is what God has done in Jesus. This is the real celebration at the Heart of Christmas. What is your response?
- **3rd Sunday of Advent: Gaudete Sunday, Rejoicing Sunday, Rose Sunday.** The purple colors of decoration and candles are interrupted by Red today. This Sunday reminds us of the joyful expectation that is just underneath the surface of Advent - the coming of the Messiah being remembered at Christmas. Are you joyful with expectation? Or is the season already becoming busy with many gatherings and end of year commitments? How could you achieve a balance over the next 3 weeks?
- **Isaiah makes a prophecy of what will happen when the Messiah arrives. Divine Holiness was expected to bring Divine Destruction... contd**

must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.

Do not complain, brothers and sisters, about one another, that you may not be judged. Behold, the Judge is standing before the gates. Take as an example of hardship and patience, brothers and sisters, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Gospel Mt 11:2-11

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

Jesus said to them in reply,
"Go and tell John what you hear and see:
the blind regain their sight,
the lame walk,
lepers are cleansed,
the deaf hear,
the dead are raised,
and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me."

As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. Then why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.

Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."



"Are you the one who is to come or should we look for another?"
Matthew 11:3

- Instead Divine Holiness reveals Divine Love. What is your expectation of the Messiah?
- The letter of James deals with the frustration the early christian community experienced in waiting for the second coming of Jesus. James gives us an image of a patient farmer waiting for his crops, or a prophet sowing the seed of his word. Have you ever 'waited' intensely for something? What happened? What support was needed? How could you apply this to your Christian journey?
- 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?' reveals John the Baptist had some doubts about Jesus as the promised Messiah. John had preached of a divine judge, a vindicator, a warrior, someone separating out the good from the bad, throwing people into 'an unquenchable fire'. Jesus' actions caused some confusion to John. What is your image of God and Messiah? What expectations do you have of God bringing 'salvation'?
- Jesus replies to John's questions: observe the signs, my deeds, figure it out for yourself. He fulfills the healing aspects of Isaiah's prophecy in healing the blind, lame, lepers. Does this Messiah meet your expectations or in frustration do you 'take offense at me'?
- What is one action that you will do to 'livetheword' this week?