

## **ADVENT 2009 - WEEK 2**

**Christ is our peace!**

### **PRESENCE of GOD**

The Lord, your God, is in your midst; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will renew you in His love; He will exult over you with loud singing...

-Zephaniah 3:17

### **PRAYER**

God of timeless grace, You fill us with joyful expectation.

Make us ready for the message that prepares the way,

that with uprightness of heart and holy joy we may eagerly await the kingdom of Your Son, Jesus Christ, Who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

### **SCRIPTURE**

#### **LUKE 3: 1-6**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias Abilene,

during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,

as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

### **HYMN: ON JORDAN'S BANK**

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry

Announces that the Lord is nigh;

Come, then, and hearken, for he brings

Glad tidings from the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every breast from sin;

Make straight the way for God within;



Prepare we in our hearts a home,  
Where such a mighty Guest may come.

For Thou art our Salvation, Lord,  
Our Refuge, and our great Reward.  
Without Thy grace our souls must fade  
And wither like a flower decayed.

## **REFLECTION**

John the Baptist, in this text, is described primarily as a voice. His words, divinely anointed and spiritually propelled, became his defining trait, his most glaring attribute, his badge of identity. As a voice, he published sacred tidings that would alter the course of human history in a most radical way. He was just a voice: no frills, no fanfare, no artificial props, no masks, no pomp, no empty ritual, and no pretense. Looking back at John inspires us to celebrate his authentic voice.

But the world today is still in need of voices, who will dare cry out in the wilderness - in the socio-economic-political wilderness, calling for sincere and sustained efforts to address such massive problems as starvation, AIDS, genocide, educational failure, the criminal justice system, and war; and also in the ecclesiastical/religious wilderness, where too much shallowness, hypocrisy, insincerity, pretension, apathy and dishonesty still abide. Such new voices will help prepare the way of the continuously approaching Kingdom of God.

## **PRAYERS of INTERCESSION**

God of hope, You raised up John the baptizer as a herald who calls us to conversion. As we joyfully await the glorious coming of Christ, we pray to You for the needs of the church and the world.

Response: **HEAR AND STRENGTHEN YOUR PEOPLE.**

**That the Church and the leaders of the Church will be faithful to the Gospel message...**

**That each of us may have the strength and courage to be prophets in our time to right injustices...**

**That we continually live lives of repentance as we prepare a way for the Lord...**

**That these weeks of Advent will be a time of growth and grace for each of us...**

Hear our humble prayer that we may serve You in holiness and faith and give voice to Your presence among us until the day of the coming of Your Son, Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

## **PRAYER**

Advent is a time of Spiritual formation if we but use it to separate ourselves from the empire that surrounds us into the life of being in the paradise we seek.

Dear Lord, help us. Choosing paradise is not easy. Advent is preparation for paradise. In this paradise we pay extraordinary attention to the will of God. We have respect for one another. We follow the Great Commandment and love one another. We seek frantically to love the world out of its bigotries, out of its inhumanity to join you in healing the sick, feeding the hungry, freeing the oppressed, loving the children - loving the world. As we seek paradise in this Advent season we thank You for the opportunity to remember and celebrate Your birth that we may begin anew our search for paradise. With Your love we begin our lives in paradise this day. Amen.



O King of all nations, Jesus Christ,  
only joy of every heart,  
come and save your people.

Saint John Baptist de La Salle  
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,  
inspire us to proclaim the Lord to all.

Live Jesus in our hearts.  
Forever!