

## 2nd Sunday Advent Year A 2022

Matthew 3:1-12



In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand'. This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

*A voice cries in the wilderness:  
Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.*

This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan, they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father", because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows

me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'

### Reflection:

John the Baptist was the last in a long line of prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah. He prepared the way for the Messiah by alerting God's people to the Messiah's impending arrival and by challenging them to change their lives by repenting for their sins.

Repentance is a fundamental change of heart, or attitude, which results in leaving our sin behind and embracing God's freely shared life and love. Repentance through prayer, fasting and charitable works leads to conversion, and conversion is an important aspect of people's preparation if they are to meet Christ when he comes.

As we prepare for Christmas, how will we prepare ourselves and help others to prepare for the arrival of the Messiah? If we follow the example of John the Baptist, we will truly be Advent people.

### Prayer:

As the rising sun comes to us each dawn  
Shine upon those who live in darkness  
That all might know the joy of our salvation  
The forgiveness of sins  
And your great mercy



For the desert places in  
which we walk  
The streets we roam  
The paths we cross  
Guide our feet  
Take us to places  
Where you would go  
Give us words that you  
would use

That in this Advent season  
Of promise and preparation  
We might point the way with John the Baptist  
To the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the  
world!