

## Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December Third Sunday of Advent

Below are Readings and Prayers for this week.

### Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December

#### Collect

God for whom we watch and wait,  
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:  
give us courage to speak the truth,  
to hunger for justice,  
and to suffer for the cause of right,  
with Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### First Reading Isaiah 61 verses 1 – 4, 8 - end

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

#### Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5 verses 16 - 24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

## **Gospel Reading John1 verses 6 -8, 19 – 28**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

## **Canticle Magnificat**

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; ◆

he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed; ◆

the Almighty has done great things for me

and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him, ◆

from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm ◆

and has scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones ◆

and lifting up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things ◆

and sent the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, ◆

to remember his promise of mercy,

The promise made to our ancestors, ◆

to Abraham and his children for ever.

*Luke 1.46-55*

Glory to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning is now

and shall be for ever. Amen.

## **Psalm 126**

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,  
we were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter,  
and our tongue with shouts of joy;  
then it was said among the nations,  
“The LORD has done great things for them.”

The LORD has done great things for us,  
and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD,  
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

May those who sow in tears  
reap with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping,  
bearing the seed for sowing,  
shall come home with shouts of joy,  
carrying their sheaves.