

02ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – 10 DEC 2023

HOME SERVICE GUIDE

A very warm welcome to everyone who has joined us for our worship service this morning.



INTROIT HYMN: MP 379 Jesus shall reign where'er the sun

GREETING AND WELCOME

Lighting of the Advent Candle (Purple – Angel or Peace Candle)

Today, on this second Sunday of Advent, we light the second candle, which is also purple, in our Advent wreath. This candle symbolizes peace. It is sometimes called, the “Angel’s Candle.” It reminds us of the message of the angels: “Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men.”

Let us pray

Dear Jesus, you entered our world on Christmas as the Prince of Peace. We light this candle in preparation of your coming and in anticipation of your peace. This Advent, fill us with a deep and abiding peace. Help us to prepare a way of righteousness and peace in our own lives, and in the world. We pray especially for those who are so in need of justice and an end to violence. Amen.

The Lord be with you
And also with you

CANTICLE 2 - Jerusalem, City of Peace

(Isaiah 2:2-5)

In the last days the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted: **it shall be established as the highest of the mountains.**

It shall be raised above the hills: **and all nations shall come flocking to it.**

Many peoples shall say Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord: **to the house of the God of Jacob.**

That he may teach us his ways: **and we may walk in his paths.**

For out of Zion shall go forth the law: **and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.**

He shall be judge between the nations: **and arbiter between the peoples.**

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares: **and their spears into pruning-hooks.**

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation: **nor ever again be trained for war.**

All you of the house of Jacob: **come let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

COLLECT FOR PURITY (APB P 105)

Let us pray

**Almighty God to whom all hearts are open all desires known
and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you
and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord**

Lord, Have mercy
Lord, Have mercy

Christ, have mercy
Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy
Lord, have mercy

PENITENCE

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments depend all the law and prophets.

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins (firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with our neighbour).

(Silence may be kept)

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father in penitence we confess that we have sinned
against you through our own fault in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have
left undone. For the sake of your Son, Christ our Lord forgive us all that is past and
grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your Name.**

ABSOLUTION

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy on you, pardon your sins and set you free from them; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

THE COLLECT

Let us pray

**God of timeless grace, you fill us with joyful expectation: make us ready for the
message that prepares the way so that with uprightness of heart and holy joy
we may eagerly await the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

OUR PARISH PRAYER

**Lord our God, thank you for calling St Augustine's to be your church in our city.
Help us to welcome you in all people, to praise you in prayer and worship, to love
you, through serving this parish and the community, to travel and grow in faith
together, to be a community of love and service in our world through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL PRAYER

God of grace and God of love, we thank you for these our children. Help them to focus their hearts and minds now on what they are about to learn. Inspire and guide our Sunday school teachers as they teach and lead these children in the way of your love and grace. Thank you for your faithfulness and loving kindness. Amen

The Word of God (APB p 107)

THE FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

THE SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

GRADUAL HYMN: MP 538 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry

On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
come then and listen, 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 you are our salvation, Lord,
our Refuge, and our great Reward.
without Your grace we waste away,
Like flowers that wither and decay.

To heal the sick stretch out Your hand,
make wholeness flow at Your command;
sin's devastation now restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.

To Him who left the throne of heaven
to save mankind, all praise be given;
to God the Father, voices raise,
and Holy Spirit, let us praise.

THE GOSPEL: Mark 1: 1-8

NICENE CREED (APB p 108)

**We believe in one God
the Father, the Almighty
maker of heaven and earth
Of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ

the only Son of God
eternally begotten of the Father
God from God, Light from Light
true God from true God
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life
who proceeds from the Father and the Son
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

Advent marks the beginning of the church's year. It is a season of expectant waiting and preparation that invites us to live in joyful hope. The focus of the Advent season is on the coming of Christ – past, present, and future. We recall the anticipation of Jesus' birth at Bethlehem; we celebrate the ways Jesus comes to us in the present, and we look forward to his second coming in glory at the end of time.

Reflection

Expectant waiting is about looking forward to, or anticipating, something. Preparation is about planning for what we are waiting for or expecting – for what we hope or think will happen. Advent is a season that should fill us with joy and hope; we should be excited and expectant; sitting on the edge of our seats as we wait on God to come again – in the babe of Bethlehem. Each new day/year should be embraced with expectation; with the expectation of God working in our lives making us a new creation – in the present and in readiness for when Christ shall come again.

Both the Isaiah reading, and Gospel speak about a **voice** crying out, '**Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.**' Isaiah calls us to clear a straight path through the wilderness; level the mountains and valleys and remember that we are like grass. His is a voice that cries out for us to hear the cries of the lonely. To chip away at those barriers that separate us from Jesus – division, hunger, pain, injustice - for ourselves and others. To

acknowledge our vulnerability and weakness. John the Baptist calls us to repentance / transformation in preparation for the one who fills us with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist's voice points to Jesus, bringing a new message for the Jewish people and for us today.

As we ponder and reflect on these readings, we need to remember that our voices should also point to Jesus by the way we actively bring love, peace and hope into the world. We don't wait passively for the world to be a better place! We are called to act – to make the changes needed - based on the message we have heard. The change is not easy or immediate but is a process that requires constant listening and acting. It is a process that leads to peaceful and righteous living; a process that makes the world a better place to live in and draws others to Christ.

As we reflect on these passages let us call to mind the voices we listen to. The messages that bombard us in our noisy, busy world. The voices of others as well as our own. Let us remember that the voices that speak to us from God's word, in the psalm and second reading, that also encourage us to seek and prepare ourselves to receive the Prince of Peace and to be peacemakers in the world.

Questions

Individually and as the body of Christ:

- What voices do we hear and what messages do they bring? How do they influence/affect us?
- What can we do to bring messages of good news? Of peace, hope, comfort, and love.
- How do, or can, we practically prepare ourselves so that Christ can come into our lives, our relationships, and our hurting and broken world?

Prayer

Most merciful and faithful God, amid life's deserts, and rough terrain of our own struggles; in our weakness and vulnerability, help us to discern your voice that brings peace that transcends the chaos of the world. May Jesus be born in, and through us, every day, we pray. Amen

THE PRAYERS – FORM D

THE PEACE (*APB p 115*)

Our Saviour Christ is the Prince of Peace; of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.

May the peace of the Lord be with you always.

Peace be with you.

THE PRESENTATION OF GIFTS (*APB p116*) Use Your Home-Made Collection Boxes.

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. All things come from you, and of your own do we give you. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer will be said one phrase at a time. Each phrase will be introduced by the celebrant and then everyone will say the relevant phrase together.

Celebrant: When our faith is weak, Lord, teach us to pray:

All: Our Father who art in heaven.

Celebrant: When we are inclined to forget about you, Lord, teach us to pray:

All: Hallowed be thy name

Celebrant: When we feel pessimistic about our lives and about the state of the world, Lord teach us to pray:

All: Thy kingdom come

Celebrant: When we have difficult decisions to make, and are tempted to take the easy way out, Lord, teach us to pray.

All: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Celebrant: When we complain about little upsets and forget that millions of people are poor and hungry, Lord, teach us to pray:

All: Give us this day our daily bread

Celebrant: When we are worried about our sins, and find it hard to forgive those who sin against us, Lord, teach us to pray:

All: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us

Celebrant: When we are troubled by temptation, Lord, teach us to pray:

All: And lead us not into temptation

Celebrant: When we find it hard to cope, Lord, teach us to pray:

All: Deliver us from evil

Celebrant: When we are preoccupied with ourselves and our own glory, Lord, teach us to pray:

All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Amen

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Almighty and everlasting God

we approach the sacrament of your only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ;

as sick, we come to the physician of life;

as unclean, to the fountain of mercy;

as blind, to the light of eternal splendour;

as needy, to the Lord of heaven and earth;

as naked, to the King of glory. Amen

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER (APB p 516)

One who is unable to receive the Sacrament physically may make a spiritual communion, and be certain that Christ comes to them in this way as surely as he does in the Sacrament.

**Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, refresh me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me;
Within your wounds hide me.
Let me never be separated from you.
From the malicious enemy, defend me.
In the hour of my death, call me, and bid me come to you
that with your saints I may praise you forever and ever. Amen.**

CONCLUSION (APB p 129)

Give thanks to the Lord for the Lord is gracious
The Lord's mercy endures for ever

**Father almighty we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.**

PRAYER FOR AFRICA

**God, bless Africa
protect our children
transform our leaders
heal our communities
restore our dignity
and give us peace;
for Jesus Christ's sake.
Amen**

FINAL BLESSING

Lord, Jesus Christ, awaken us to your presence that we may hear your voice today and so be ready and willing to receive you; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and all whom you love and pray for today and always.
Amen

DISMISSAL (APB 129)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.