

An Evening Service by Zoom Preparing the way

— Advent 3



'Prepare the Way'

Declan Tuckey, Year 5, St John's Catholic Parish Primary School, Dapto, Australia, 2021

*Sing songs of hope into the waiting air
and begin the dance of joy,
for the life of faith is before us.
Look into the distance and see the rising dawn
with shining rays in acts of love
and warming brightness from the heart of God.*

Opening Prayers

We come to celebrate John the Baptist
and all who point the way to the coming of Christ.

Silence

We, too, are called to prepare the way for his coming.

With John the Baptist and all your saints, we ask this grace:
That we may have true, heartfelt repentance for our sins
and know your forgiveness;

let us prepare a way for the Lord

That we may be turned around to the values of your kingdom
and seek to live by them;

let us prepare a way for the Lord.

That we may be renewed by the fire of your Spirit
and find energy and inspiration;

let us prepare a way for the Lord.

That we may see your truth and light
and testify to them;

let us prepare a way for the Lord.

Canticle

The Magnificat – the Song of Mary

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.**

**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.**

Readings

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Chapter 40 verses 3-5

A voice cries out:
'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

The Gospel according to John Chapter 1, verses 6-8 and 19-28

The Ministry of John the Baptist

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.

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 he 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 baptising if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptise 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 strap of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptising.

Reflection

Prayers

Lord, in the silence, let us acknowledge
that we do not always know how to prepare for you.
Help us to have the resolve to seek your presence
and the clarity to recognise it.

Prayers will be shown on screen.

Ending

At the beginning, at the end,
at this moment in between,
in these best and worst of times:
May we know, always, the blessing of God.

Amen.