



## SUNDAY TABLE SERVICE

13th December 2020  
Third Sunday in Advent



*Let us watch Songs of Praise together on the ABC and then set the table for our shared meal.*

- ***Setting our table for our Sunday lunch service.***

Sometimes we eat, in front of the TV either together or alone; we eat on the run; we eat out in in restaurants or even in our car; but today we sit at a table that we have set for our Sunday lunch meal. It is our everyday altar of life-giving food.

As we celebrate on this, the first Sunday in Advent, let us define the occasion by adding something special to our table that bring us Joy.

- ***Prayerful and intentional preparation for a meal***

Let us set our meal for this day. Give some thought to the presentation of our meal as a meditation on the importance of the time we are setting aside for worship.



### **The Sovereign Lord God Has Sent Me**

to bring good news to the afflicted  
to bind up the broken-hearted  
to proclaim liberty to captives  
to proclaim freedom to prisoners..  
Isaiah 61:1



Isiah 61 is a proclamation of the amazing grace and love of our Lord. In Luke 4 Jesus speaks the very words reading from this Old testament chapter. In V21 he says today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. The meaning behind why He came, what He was to do and who He is, was revealed in that moment. But after the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension the significance of Isaiah 61 still resonates with us today. The same Spirit in the form of a dove who came down upon Jesus when John baptised him is what we see in Luke 4:18 when Jesus proclaims, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." It is His anointing to bring the good news, to bring healing, and liberty to our hearts and souls. John the Baptist tells everyone that Jesus will baptise us with his Spirit. The Promise so long ago from Isaiah meant that we are all to Join with Jesus in this amazing anointing of the Holy Spirit. Our salvation means that we are also channels of God's salvation grace to others, called to join with Jesus in such a precious work.

***opening prayer — consciously drawing together in our mind our Parish community around our table.***

Be still and silent. Visualise in your mind, those whom you invited to share with you. Pray:

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Here, and throughout the world,  
We adore you O Christ, and we bless you,  
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. Amen**

**Bless this food, both physical and spiritual.  
Bless all who gather at your table, both seen and unseen, In Jesus' name  
we pray. Amen**



- ***Let us read and reflect on our cycle of readings***

**A reading from the prophet of Isaiah, Chapter 61 beginning at Verse 1**

<sup>1</sup> 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 brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and



release to the prisoners; <sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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.

Hear the word of the Lord, *thanks be to God*

Song of Mary

Psalm 126

<sup>1</sup> When the Lord turned again the fortunes of Zion: then were we like those restored to life.

My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.  
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;  
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

<sup>2</sup> Then was our mouth filled with laughter: and our tongue with singing.

The Almighty works marvels for me.  
Holy his name!

<sup>3</sup> Then said they among the heathen: 'The Lord has done great things for them.'

His mercy is from age to age,  
on those who fear him.

<sup>4</sup> Truly the Lord has done great things for us: and therefore, we rejoiced.

He puts forth his arm in strength  
and scatters the proud-hearted.  
He casts the mighty from their thrones  
and raises the lowly.

<sup>5</sup> Turn again our fortunes, O Lord: as the streams return to the dry south.

He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.  
He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy,  
the mercy promised to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his sons for ever.

<sup>6</sup> Those who sow in tears: shall reap with songs of joy.

<sup>7</sup> They that go out weeping, bearing the seed: shall come again in gladness, bringing their sheaves with them.

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians, *Chapter 5 beginning at Verse 12*

continually  
pray, thankful,  
joyful, always  
be Thessalonians  
5:16-18

<sup>12</sup> But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; <sup>13</sup> esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. <sup>14</sup> And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. <sup>15</sup> See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. <sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not despise the words of prophets, <sup>21</sup> but test everything; hold fast to what is good; <sup>22</sup> abstain from every form

of evil. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. <sup>5</sup> Beloved, pray for us. <sup>26</sup> Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. <sup>27</sup> I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them. <sup>28</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Hear the word of the Lord,

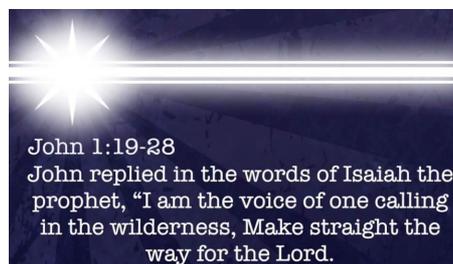
***thanks be to God.***

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, *Chapter 1 beginning at verse 6*

***Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>19</sup> This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup> He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." <sup>21</sup> And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." <sup>22</sup> Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup> 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.



<sup>24</sup> Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup> They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" <sup>26</sup> John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup> the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." <sup>28</sup> This took place in

Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

This is the Gospel of the Lord,

***praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

**Sentence**

**Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God.**

***• eating reflectively and responding to the passage***

Let us now engage in some quiet reflection, or conversation and sharing, responding to the Gospel passage. We may like to write down some key thoughts for further reflection.

He has looked with favour on the lowliness of His servant

The one who calls you is faithful

Advent is a time of expectant waiting, but a waiting in where we prepare ourselves; our hearts and souls for the coming of the Lord. Mary was given a promise, and then she entered into a time of waiting all the while being very expectant. Here too she proclaims the work of the Lord to come, speaking the words from 1 Samuel 2; we call it her Magnificat, her thankful magnification of the Lord who fulfills his promises. Paul implores the Thessalonians give thanks in all circumstances, do not despise the prophets, or quench the Spirit. Mary was called by God and she became the fulfilment of Samuels prophecy. Isaiah and John the Baptist prophesy that we too have a calling and share in the anointed work of the Lord. Paul says "The one who has called you is faithful and He will do this." Just as Mary was overwhelmed with Joy so too should we wait in this Joy, knowing we are being the fulfilment of prophecy that others may enter into. Then just as Mary said, so we can say, all generations will call us blessed.



• **prayer-time** Now let us continue to offer our prayers for healing of the world; for those affected by coronavirus; for family; for members of the parish and wider community, for the life and ministry of the Church, for encouragement in our journey of faith.



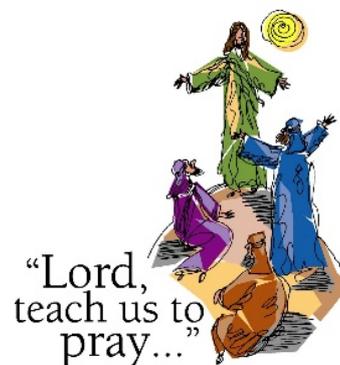
***Please pray alongside those in our parish asking for prayer.***

We pray for Kathy Squire who died peacefully on Wednesday. We give thanks for her life work and mission amongst us and the Mothers Union. Please pray for her family and friends at this time. May she rest in peace and rise in Glory. We continue to pray with, Lynn Hann in hospital having tests, David, Ron & Ann; Kathy; Pat ;Izabelle; Peta ; Mariette; Joanne; Peter G, Peter C; Nicholas B; Samantha; Fiona; Brenton; Sue; Brenda; Pat; Brendon; Fr Peter; Fr Percy & Betty; Bp David; Bill; David H; Marjorie; Diane; Jean; Mitchell and family; Carolyn;; Angela; Carol; Shirley; Lucy Ann; Margaret, Lyn; Ted & Joyce; Irene; Linda; Tina; Wendy; Chris; Trevor; Liz; Tristan & Trish S; Lainie and Nicholas; John Carroll; Jac Bishop, Joan; Joanie; Andrew; Kerrie; Mary, Kate, Colin, Cathy, Carol, Allison, Ann, Jean and Betty *and any others we wish to say either silently or aloud.*

***Let us say the Lord's Prayer Together. Our Father .....***

**Prayer of the Day**

Eternal God,  
you sent John the Baptist  
to prepare the way for the coming of your Son:  
grant us wisdom to see your purpose  
and openness to hear your will,  
that we too may prepare the way for Christ  
who is coming in power and glory  
to establish his rule of peace and justice;  
through Jesus Christ our Judge and our Redeemer,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**



**Conclude the meal with the following prayer together.**

***May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be amongst us and remain with us always.  
Amen.***

***Intentional connection beyond your home***

After our Table Service, make contact via phone, email, letter, Messenger, Skype, Zoom, etc with a person who is on your heart and mind at this time. It might be one of the people you invited to your meal, or a member of your family, or someone who doesn't have family, or a friend, Let God guide you to the person or people with whom you connect. Contact the person. Start a conversation: 'I was thinking of you.....' Or What did you think of..... in songs of praise etc.

