



SUNDAY TABLE SERVICE

12th December 2021 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 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.

Today is the Third Sunday in Advent, a time for reflection, preparation and anticipation of the coming of Jesus. Often Advent is a time of prayer, fasting and giving. So, as we worship at home today let us define the occasion by adding something special to our table, acknowledging the importance of the time we are setting aside for worship. If you are celebrating this meal without people physically present, please be aware that **God Is With You.**



THE REFINED FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Have you been truly sorry for something you have done? In the Gospel reading John compares the hearts of the tax collectors and soldiers to the people coming with unrepentant hearts. What the difference was, was in their actions and John the Baptist says, "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. When we have made a mistake and the consequences have affected another we do what we can to compensate for what has happened, perhaps we could go the extra mile to cloth and feed others too. This is the tangible fruit John is talking about. He says that the water baptism is not enough, Jesus came to baptise us as well. He baptises us with His Holy Spirit and fire. Fire is also a form of purification.



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 Zephaniah, Chapter 3 beginning at Verse 14

¹ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The Lord has taken away the judgments against you he has turned



away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. ¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷ The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over

you with loud singing ¹⁸ as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰ At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

[NRSV Zephaniah 3:14-20] Hear the word

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

Psalm: Song of Isaiah [page 391 APBA]

'Behold, God is my salvation:

I will trust and will not be afraid;

'For the Lord God is my strength and my song:
and has become my salvation.'

With joy you will draw water:
from the wells of salvation.

On that day you will say:

'Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name;

'Make known his deeds among the nations:
proclaim that his name is exalted.

'Sing God's praises, who has triumphed gloriously:
let this be known in all the world.

'Shout and sing for joy, you that dwell in Zion:

for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.'

God is my Salvation

I will trust and not be afraid

Isaiah 12:2

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians Chapter 4 beginning at Verse 4



⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus

[NRSV Philippians 4:4-7] Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke, Chapter 3 beginning at verse 7 Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able

from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” ¹¹ In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³ He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

[NRSV Luke 3:7-18] This is the Gospel of the Lord, ***praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***



Sentence

Do not fear. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love.

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 will renew you in his love

They asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?”

John is saying that when we turn from our selfishness and are baptised into the obedience of Christ then we are open for the Holy Spirit to convict our souls. We become repentant people and live daily as forgiven people forgiving. Baptism in water is symbolic of our love and obedience to God. Baptism in the Spirit is as real as ever as we hear with our souls how to live righteously and this comes by the voice of the Spirit. Because of our obedience, it is as if the Holy Spirit who shows us our faults, which are like chaff, and consumes any corruption in us as we surrender it to Him. Salvation becomes a living thing of fruitfulness as we journey every day with Christ.



Please pray alongside those in our parish asking for prayer. We continue to pray alongside, Ted & Joyce and Miriam; Ann W, Ruth , Lynn , Joannie, Matthew, Kym and Bob, Izabelle; Peta; Mariette; Joanne; Peter G, Peter C; Samantha; Fiona; Brenton; Sue; Pat; Brendon; Bill; David H; Diane; Jean; Carolyn; Allison; Angela; Carol; Shirley; Lucy



Ann; Margaret, Lyn; Irene; Linda; Tina; Wendy; Chris; Trevor; Liz; Tristan & Trish S; Carole and family; Peter, Eleni and Nicholas; Jac Bishop, Joanie; Andrew; Kerrie; David Jones; Claire; Jean; Dan Thomas; Trish; Claire; Fr Graham & Catherine; & Blair; Aileen; Ann; Tom & Nick; Stephen, Bill, Eileen Cook; Tessa; Yvonne Scrutton; Sylvia; Gabrielle, Brenda; Judith: Gabrielle; and *any others we wish to remember.*

Let us say the Lord's Prayer Together.

Our Father

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God,
you sent your Son into a world
where the wheat must be winnowed from the chaff
and evil clings even to what is good:
let the fire of your Spirit purge us of all corruption,
so that, purified, we may wait eagerly for him whose coming is certain,
whose Day draws near, your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of 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 spend some time reaching out to others, a member of your family, or someone who does not have family, or a friend, someone in your community who may be alone and would welcome a call or message from you. Let God guide you to the person or persons with whom you should connect. Contact them. Start a conversation: How have you been keeping, what about this changing weather or hope you are keeping well, or I was just thinking of you and decided to call

