



SUNDAY TABLE SERVICE

Sunday 8th 2024

Second Sunday in Advent

*Let us sit and watch Songs of Praise
together on the ABC*



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



As we celebrate on this, the Second Sunday in Advent, let us define the occasion by adding something special to our table that will remind us of the Peace that God brings to us. If you are celebrating this meal alone please be aware that **God Is With You.**



Why a reading of John the Baptist leading up to Christmas. John repeats the prophesy foretelling of the coming of the Messiah. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Messiah means deliverer or salvation. Christmas is not simply the celebration of a baby, but the acknowledgement of God bringing deliverance to a world in a big mess. Right from the start humanity decided to go it alone without God, to be their own Gods. This is what sin actually means. So, Jesus

came to literally be our salvation. To restore our relationship with God and to carry His Spirit within us.

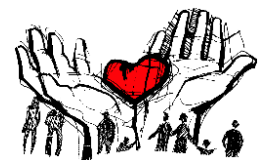
opening prayer — consciously drawing together in our mind our Parish community around our table.

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 Malachi . 3:1-14



See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight — indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will

sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness.

Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts. For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished.

Ever since the days of your ancestors you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, "How shall we return?" Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, "How are we robbing you?" In your tithes and offerings! You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me — the whole nation of you! Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.

I will rebuke the locust for you, so that it will not destroy the produce of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not be barren, says the Lord of hosts. Then all nations will count you happy, for you will be a land of delight, says the Lord of hosts. You have spoken harsh words against me, says the Lord. Yet you say, "How have we spoken against you?" You have said, "It is vain to serve God. What do we profit by keeping his command or by going about as mourners before the Lord of hosts?"

Hear the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

For the Psalm — Song of Zechariah — A.P.B.A. page 10

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel:

who has come to his people and set them free.

The Lord has raised up for us a mighty Saviour:
born of the house of his servant David.

Through the holy prophets, God promised of old:

to save us from our enemies,

from the hands of all who hate us,

To show mercy to our forbears:

and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear:

holy and righteous before him, all the days of our life.

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High:

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation:

by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God:

the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death:

and to guide our feet into the way of peace.



A reading from the letter to the Philippians 1:1-11

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am

confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me



in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the

harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. Hear the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke 3: 1-6

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

The Gospel of the Lord Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



Sentence

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. Luke 1.78-79

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.

Luke 1:77 You will give his people knowledge of salvation and forgiveness of their sins

Luke 3:6 All flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord.

To be complete as humans we need God within us. God designed us to bare his image and carry his likeness. John says make straight your paths, meaning to turn away from the rough roads and walk on the untroubled ways of God. This is what repentance means. It is Jesus who makes this way possible. Salvation therefore, is a journey with Christ allowing his Spirit to transform us from the damage of sin into God's glorious likeness so that his nature becomes ours. We become God's evidence to all. And Christmas is what all this means.



prayer-time We pray 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. We offer our prayers for those in need, those looking for peace and reconciliation.

Father God, we pray for our world today. We pray for peace and hope to abound. Surround with your Grace all those who are caught up in the wars and conflicts ,are affected by natural

disasters: floods, droughts and forest fires. are struggling with poverty and the global food crisis. Mighty God, give us faith like John the Baptist, strong enough to believe even in a dessert that you and your kingdom are no farther from us than our hands. Make our heart strong like his, not swayed by trials or snared by false pleasures. Give us courage to be faithful until your promises are fulfilled. Amen.



We pray alongside those in our parish asking for prayer, Patrusca, Lorraine, Rachel (Bill *& Margarets daughter), Steve (Fr Dennis and Mary son), Ebony (Peter and Heather's daughter in law) Deryn recovering from surgery, Pat, Jean, Nicole, David, Takoohi , Glenda, Margaret, Wendy, Gweneth, Jo and Ginne ,Joyce and Ted, Matthew, Ann , Kathryn and Keiran, Ruth, Jean N, Colin , Georgia (Sunaras Mum). Pat V, Brenda, Joanie, Jo, Jan, Joy I, Jac Bishop; Eileen Cook; Ursula Pridham; Barbara Webber; Tom Arnold; Nicholas & Ben; Sue & Frank Gordon; Emily and her family; Trish Simon; Christina and any others we wish to remember, either silently or aloud.

Let us say the Lord's Prayer Together.

Our Father



Prayer of the Day

God of our salvation,
you straighten the winding ways of our hearts
and smooth the paths made rough by sin:
keep our hearts watchful in holiness,
and bring to perfection the good you have begun in us.
We ask this through 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: 'I was thinking of you.....' Or What did you think of.....

