

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 145)

ANTIPHON: Lord, come and save us.

RESPONSE: Lord, come and save us.

LECTOR: It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, who is just to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **R.**

LECTOR: It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, who raises up those who are bowed down, the Lord, who protects the stranger and upholds the widow and orphan. **R.**

LECTOR: It is the Lord who loves the just but thwarts the path of the wicked. The Lord will reign for ever, Zion's God, from age to age. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 35:1-6, 10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

NEXT WEEK (4th Sunday of Advent, Year A) Isaiah 7:10-14; Ps 23; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

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Sharing the light during Advent



14 December 2025 3rd Sunday Advent Year A

What are you like at waiting? As one person said: "I'm no good at waiting, but one day as I stood in line at a local supermarket, I realised I was waiting. Waiting! I was doing what Advent is all about."

That's what John the Baptist, one of the striking Advent figures, is doing in this week's gospel. Waiting in prison for news of the Messiah, wondering is this the one he'd been expecting? We all know the feeling given the expectations we might have of Jesus.

But Jesus says to John's disciples, tell him what you see and hear, that the blind, the lame, the deaf, the lives of those cast out have been transformed. He isn't fulfilling John's expectations so much as calling our attention to the prophecy of Isaiah which is referred to in the first reading.

The lives of those cast out are transformed and, as in Isaiah, where the wilderness blooms now the exile in Babylon is over, they too may return from a kind of exile, full of hope. In the gospel these are the signs of the kingdom that Jesus points too, rather than God's retribution.

So, what do we see and hear? Can we glimpse the working of God among us in Advent? This may seem a daunting task because we're so caught up in the 'festive season' that any talk of slowing down is best left till Boxing Day. But what if we're able to see something else in what we're already

doing? That's what the woman standing in the queue at the supermarket is doing; she's waiting and that's what Advent is about.

Could standing there, or wherever we find ourselves waiting, be such a moment? Why not put the phone away and wait? And what about a more formal moment, as we light the third, pink candle of the Advent wreath, on Gaudete or Rejoice Sunday?

Amidst the call to pray and to fast, we seek to light a candle and share that light with the forgotten ones, inviting them to eat with us, welcoming them into our lives. In pointing to the Christ who is to come John bears witness to this light. That's the point of his life, doubts and all, and why Jesus says there is none greater.

The point of our lives is to become more Christ-like and discover our 'greatness' in him. In doing so 'the least in the kingdom of Heaven will be greater' than John is. We rejoice that we're invited to help build up the kingdom and to enable this we must learn to be patient. As the second reading says, waiting in expectation of the Lord's coming, for he will come and is already present among us, not attempting to force God's hand.

In Advent, we're preparing a way for the Lord, realising, once again, that God so loves the world.

Damian Coleridge
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