Year B – Second Sunday of Advent – Dec. 6, 2026

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: *Show us your steadfast love, O Lord and grant us your salvation.*

All: **Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,**
For God will speak peace to his people.
Surely God's salvation is at hand for those who fear God, that God's glory may dwell in our land.

Leader: *Faithfulness will spring up from the ground and righteousness will look down from the sky.*

All: **The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness will go before God and will make a path for God's steps. Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11

The words of Isaiah were written to comfort the Jewish people, who were exiled in Babylon. The word "comfort" in Isaiah's usage means to strengthen. With tender words, God encourages Israel to remain a people of hope. Liberation and the return to their homeland is assured, because it is God who promises to level the mountains and raise the valleys, providing a straight and level road for Israel's return from captivity.

1. How has God made the "uneven ground and rough places" level in your life?
2. How were you transformed / strengthened by this experience?
3. What obstacles might be leveled / removed from your life in the upcoming week as you prepare to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas?

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15

The reading from the Second Letter of Peter turns our attention and expectation to the second coming of Christ *("the parousia").* The listener is challenged to move toward moral maturity in preparation for life in the "new heavens and a new earth," that will accompany Jesus' return.

1. Name one way that the "Lord is patient" with the world, with people, with you?
2. With whom could you / we be more patient this week?
3. "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief"… Why does Peter use such a description? Should we be frightened about all these things being dissolved?

Gospel Mark 1: 1-8

"The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark tells us everything we need to know about Jesus in the first verse of his gospel! Each person in the gospel has to come to know what we know from the first verse. This is the first gospel to be written – and the shortest – but Mark makes it clear that this is just the "beginning". Today we continue in the "in-between time" before the completion of God's plan. It is through the message of John the Baptist imaged in the prophetic tradition of the Hebrew scriptures that we are exhorted to prepare ourselves for the day of the Lord. John the Baptist calls us to repent – that is, to turn round (180 degrees!) and live our lives oriented in an entirely new direction. The path that John the Baptist beckons us to, goes through the wilderness, to the waters of Baptism, and then with the Gift of the Holy Spirit leads us to a very real meeting with Jesus.

1. In the Advent message of the Gospel of Mark we witness that a prophet takes risks, often having to speak out against – or live in opposition to – the status quo. Who do you know who has experienced the risk of prophetic life by speaking/living the truth in love? Have you experienced this risk?
2. How will you find a wilderness or desert time in this busy season where you might prepare your heart and mind for the coming of Jesus?
3. How might you be a prophet during this advent season that others might come to know the true meaning of Christmas?

LIVING THE WORD
How is God calling us/you this week to live the Word?

PRAYING THE WORD
For our parish, our families and ourselves that we may learn to create desert time so as to allow God to prepare our hearts and minds for Christ's coming, we pray to the Lord.

Invite intercessions. Conclude your prayer with the "Our Father."

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: Come Lord! Millions do not know You and for those of us who do, how does knowing You make a difference?
All: **What is the point of your Presence if our lives do not alter? Change our lives, shatter our complacency, O Lord.**
Leader: Make Your Word "flesh of our flesh, blood of our blood" and our life's purpose.
All: **Take away our complacency. Press us uncomfortably. For only thus will we find that true peace -- Your peace.**

Leader: *Let us offer each other a sign of peace, a peace the world cannot give.*