

Christ Child Catholic Church
*Dedicated to Growth in Christ and to the
Challenges of Loving Service*

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 6, 2020

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

God's People Are Comforted

40:1 – 66:24. Isaiah, having predicted the Babylonian exile (39:6, 7), looks ahead in these chapters and speaks to these future exiles as if present with them. God still cares for them and intends to deliver them, but before that can happen, they must confess their sin and renew their broken covenant relationship with Him. To facilitate reconciliation between the exiled people and their God, God announces that He will send His Suffering **Servant** to atone for their sins. Israel is comforted with the assurance that her **warfare is ended** and her **iniquity is pardoned**; therefore, she is free to return home. Even when God must discipline His children, He never abandons them. **He offers forgiveness and restoration.**

Fulfilling this prophecy, **John the Baptist** called people to repentance, which was foundational to covenant renewal.

Wilderness is a symbol of servitude, discipline, and punishment for sin. Just as people would clear the path for a coming dignitary, God's people must **prepare the way** (lit. "Clear the way of obstacles") for Him with repentance. He would return to His city, bringing the exiles with Him from Babylon.

God's powerful **arm**, a symbol of His military strength, would establish His **rule** as He defeated His enemies. This same mighty arm gently

gathers His **lambs** -a metaphor for His exiled people- and holds them close as He carried them back to Jerusalem.

"Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Kindness and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall kiss. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven.

The Lord himself will give his benefits; our land shall yield its increase."

Psalm 85: 11-12

Second reading 2 Peter 3: 8-14

God's Promise Is Not Slack

As fallen humans, it is our nature to become impatient if our expectations are not immediately fulfilled. But the apparent delay in Christ's return is a gift of mercy, a sign of God's patience. In His great love, He waits, granting people the opportunity **to repent** and be saved, **not willing that any should perish.**

This "grace period" until Jesus returns gives Christians more time to spread the good news of salvation as well.

We can be certain: **the day of the Lord** (a common OT term for judgment) **will come**, and when it does, there will then be no more chance of repentance.

Because **all things will be dissolved** in the final judgment, the course for Christians is clear until then: They should remember what is eternal and work toward godly ends. They should discipline themselves to think and live biblically.

The promise of **new heavens and a new earth** implies something far different from this world – even better than the Garden of Eden.

Although Christ's return will be accompanied by judgment: "looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God..."). His final purpose is not destruction but establishing a new earth where **righteousness dwells. This will be a perfected place for all who put their trust in Christ.**

The Gospel Mark 1: 1-8

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

Mark begins by calling Jesus **the Son of God**, a theme he returns to frequently. No one can mistake his clear intent to declare both the deity of

Jesus and God as His heavenly Father in this Gospel.

Both Mark and Peter (Acts 10:37) begin their narrative of Jesus' ministry with the work of Christ's cousin (Luke 1:36) and forerunner, **John the Baptist**. John preached a **baptism of repentance**, urging his listeners to turn from their sin and turn decisively toward God and His righteous ways. Mark roots the ministry of Jesus in the words of the OT prophets, demonstrating that Jesus' appearance was long anticipated in Israelite history. The prophesied messenger was **John the Baptist**, who –in fulfilment of Isaiah's vision- prepared Israel to return from the exile of sin. John the Baptist proclaimed Christ's superiority by distinguishing between his own baptism **with water** and the Messiah's baptism **with the Holy Spirit.**

For Pregnancy Support

Birthright 241-8444 or 800-550-4900

MASS INTENTIONS December 5 – 11, 2020

Saturday 4:00 p.m. + Gerardo Fuentes
Sunday 10:00 a.m. + Leslie R. Olsen
Monday 4:00 p.m. For our sick people
Tuesday 9:00 a.m. + Allan Gray
Thursday 9:00 a.m. + Teresa Espinoza Cruz
Friday 9:00 a.m. + John Fontana

**THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
PATRONAL FEAST DAY OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICAN
MASS:
MONDAY DECEMBER 7 AT 4 PM.
TUESDAY DECEMBER 8 AT 9 AM.**

**THE VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY OF THE
LORD**

Thursday, December 24th
The Mass at 2:00 p.m.
And 4:00 p.m.

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
CHRISTMAS Friday, December 25th
The Mass at 10:00 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)
On Friday December 11th at 5:00 PM.

17th Annual Giving at Greenfield

All gifts should be dropped off at Christ Child no later than 11 am. On Sunday, Dec. 6th we will deliver gifts

SATURDAY, December 12th

Contact Karen at 408 375-0984 (Cell).

CRACKS

All too many people today don't bother believing in God. It's not that they reject God. It's that they don't know what path to follow to encounter God. And yet, God isn't far away. Though hidden in the very interior of life! God follows our all too often wandering or hopeless steps, with respectful and discrete love.

How to perceive God's presence?

Mark reminds us of the cry of the prophet in the middle of the desert: **Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.** Where and how to open paths for God in our lives? We shouldn't think of splendid and spacious ways through which a spectacular God comes. The Catalonian theologian J.M. Rovira has reminded us that God comes close to us seeking the crack that a person keeps open for what's true, good, beautiful, and human. Those are the chinks of life that we need to pay attention to in order to open pathways for God.

For some, life has become a labyrinth. Busy about a thousand things, they move around and get agitated without stopping, but don't know whether they're coming or going. There opens for them a crack toward God when they stop to encounter what's best in themselves.

There are those who live a =decaffeinated= life, flat and insignificant in which the only thing that's important is to be entertained. They can only glimpse God if they start to pay attention to the mystery that beats in the depth of life.

Others live submerged in =the foam of appearances=. They're only concerned about their image, what's apparent and external. They

will find themselves closer to God if they simply seek the truth.

Those who live fragmented into a thousand pieces by the noise, the verbiage, the ambitions or the hurry, will only make way toward God if they make the effort to find a guideline that humanizes their lives.

Many go about finding God if they know to pass from a defensive attitude before God to a posture of welcome, from an arrogant tone to humble prayer, from fear to love, from self-condemnation to being open to forgiveness. And everyone will make more room for God in their life if they seek God with a simple heart.

José Antonio Pagola.

Translator: Fr. Jay VonHandort

A Few Notes.....

We will be holding masses outdoors.

Dress warmly and be warmed by joining your parish community.

If it is raining or too cold, still come at the time of the scheduled Mass to receive Holy Eucharist and thus be reunited with Christ Our Savior.

You can receive Communion in your car if you wish.

The weekday masses are less crowded so come then if that makes you feel more comfortable.

There are lots of online masses listed on the Diocese of Monterey website if that is a better option for you.

Reflect on and discuss the readings and Gospel at home with your families to help your children see faith in action!

The Vatican opens a web about “Fratelli Tutti”

<http://www.humandevlopment.va/es.html>

In three languages Spanish, English and Italian!!!