

## Our Lady of Perpetual Help

# Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT—December 15, 2019

### First Reading — Isaiah 35:1-6, 10

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you."

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup> then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ... <sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

### Responsorial Psalm PS 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10.

R. (cf. Is 35:4) **Lord, come and save us.**

or:

**R. Alleluia.**

The LORD God keeps faith forever,  
secures justice for the oppressed,  
gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets captives free.

**R. Lord, come and save us.**

or:

**R. Alleluia.**

The LORD gives sight to the blind;  
the LORD raises up those who were bowed  
down.

The LORD loves the just;

the LORD protects strangers.

**R. Lord, come and save us.**

or:

**R. Alleluia.**

The fatherless and the widow he sustains,  
but the way of the wicked he thwarts.

The LORD shall reign forever;

your God, O Zion, through all generations.

**R. Lord, come and save us.**

or:

**R. Alleluia.**

### Second Reading — James 5:7-10

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives the early and the late rain. <sup>8</sup> You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup> Do not grumble, brethren, against one another, that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the doors. <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

### Gospel Reading — Matthew 11:2-11

<sup>2</sup> Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is he who takes no offense at me."

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> Why then did you go out? To see a man

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clothed in soft raiment? Behold, those who wear soft raiment are in kings' houses. <sup>9</sup> Why then did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.'  
<sup>11</sup> Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

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### INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

### Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

### INVITATION TO REFLECT

### INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

#### First Reading — Isaiah 35:1-6, 10

1. What message of hope would you bring to people in our country this Advent season?

#### Second Reading — James 5:7-10

2. How does living a life of patience interface with living a life of hope?

#### Gospel Reading — Matthew 11:2-11

3. What can we learn from Jesus' answer to John the Baptist, that would help us live a life of hope?
4. One of John the Baptist's tasks was to be the Lord's messenger. How should we continue that ministry?
5. The other aspect of John the Baptist's ministry was to prepare the way for acceptance of Jesus. How can we continue that aspect of his ministry also?

### INVITATION TO ACT

*Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.*

### CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

*Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.*