

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT — DECEMBER 6, 2020

First Reading — Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

¹ Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."... ⁹ Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young

Responsorial Psalm PS 85:9-10-11-12, 13-14

R. (8) Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

I will hear what God proclaims; the LORD—for he proclaims peace to his people. Near indeed is his salvation to those who fear him, glory dwelling in our land.

R. 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.

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

The LORD himself will give his benefits; our land shall yield its increase. Justice shall walk before him, and prepare the way of his steps.
R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Second Reading — 2 Peter 3:8-14

⁸ But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness, but is forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up. ¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire! ¹³ But according to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you wait for these, be zealous to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

Gospel Reading — Mark 1:1-8

¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; ³ the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight—" ⁴ John the baptiser appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And there went out to him all

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the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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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 —

1. Identify the messages Isaiah is heralding.
2. What mountainous, uneven, rough places in your life would you like to have smoothed?

Second Reading —

3. On a scale of 1—10, with 1 being sheer joy, and 10 being sheer terror, how do you feel about the above passage and the return of Jesus? Why?
4. How does God want you to feel about his return? What would make you feel better about it?

Gospel Reading —

5. What attitudes are essential for preparing a way for the Lord?
6. What is the relationship between the baptism of repentance, baptism of water and baptism of the Holy Spirit?
7. What do we mean when we speak of “remembering our baptismal vows”

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.