



Up, Jerusalem!
stand upon
the heights;
look to the east
and see your
children
gathered from
the east and
the west
at the word
of the Holy One,
rejoicing that
they are
remembered
by God. *Baruch 5:5*

Prospect of Jerusalem
Wenceslaus Hollar
(Bohemian, 1607-1677)
1660
Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York

Second
Sunday of

Advent

December 5, 2021

My Dear People of God,

Welcome to the Second Sunday of Advent. This Sunday and next, the Gospel readings invite us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. The mission of John the Baptist was to prepare the way for the Lord Jesus Christ and we see that clearly in the gospel reading today as he uses the words of the Prophet Isaiah to call his audience and indeed all of us to prepare for the Lord. The call for us today therefore is to **Prepare the Way for the Lord**.



The famous fable about the ant and the grasshopper remains a significant anecdote on the importance of preparation. The ant works hard during the summer, storing up food and building up a safe and warm basement house underneath the soil. The grasshopper, on the other hand, plays around and thinks that the ant is overly enthusiastic and stupid. The winter arrives sooner than usual. The ant is warm and well-fed while the grasshopper starves, freezes and dies in the cold.

The world runs on the contingency of preparation whether proximate or immediate. Preparation is essential to life as the foreground to success. Living in the Hurricane prone South Louisiana, we are all familiar with the importance of preparation for storms. We are conversant with the statement that says that failure to prepare is a preparation to fail. The gospel reading this Second Sunday of Advent challenges us to get into the preparation mood as the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ approaches. The Gospel passage identifies the ministry of John as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah about the voice crying out in the desert saying:

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

The obvious question we may ask is: **“How are we to prepare for the Lord”?**

Every mountain and hill shall be made low: Mountains and hills are elevated landscapes or a natural landform that rise higher than their extended surrounding. In this context, mountains and hills are obstacles that need to be moved. The description “lofty mountain” in the First Reading is an indication that the mountain has an exaggerated height; that means it is supercilious and arrogant. This description resonates with what sin does in our lives. It takes us to a false height and gives us false security.

We could recall that in one of the temptations, the devil took Jesus to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor (Matt. 4:8). The high mountain here is the point of sin and disobedience. Bringing down the lofty mountain means dismantling all the structures of sin in our lives. It means coming down to the level that God had designed for us.

Every valley shall be filled: A valley is the opposite of a mountain. It indicates the absence of what should be present; a deficiency. Filling that valley would mean bringing back the virtues and values we lost on account of our senseless ties with mundane things. We fill the valleys of our lives after dismantling the lofty mountains and allowing the grace of God to lead us.

Make straight His paths: This Second Sunday of Advent provides a step forward in our march towards the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord is coming to us, and the roadway is our hearts, and we need to make that roadway usable for the coming of the Lord. The call to make straight is a call to embrace the **bee line**, the direct path the Lord, instead of meandering.

In the Second Reading (Phil 1:4-6, 8-11), St. Paul encourages this roadway reconstruction by increasing in our love, knowledge, discernment of right values and keeping ourselves pure and blameless for the day of Christ. We could further achieve the demands of this invitation to prepare by giving up the old lives and (Eph. 4:22) and taking up the new life (Eph. 4:24).

My dear brothers and sisters, as we enter into the Second week of Advent, may we pay attention to the call for personal preparation beyond the external decorations we set up around us. The ideal preparation is not the Christmas tree nor the images of Santa around our living spaces. The journey is within the heart, and that is where we shall meet the Lord.

Have a beautiful Second Sunday of Advent and keep up with the spirit of committed waiting and preparation for the coming of the Lord.

Thanks and God bless,
Fr Simon Peter

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve Masses:
4:00 PM and 6:00 PM
Midnight

Christmas Day Mass:
9:00 AM

ADVENT MASS SCHEDULE

(In addition to regularly scheduled mass and confession times.)

Mass
Monday—Friday 6 PM

Confession
Monday-Friday
AM: 7:30-7:55 & PM: 5:30-5:55

An Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness,
send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces
to hear your voice each day.

We who are anxious over many things
look forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways
long for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy
seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness,
yet seeking the light.

To you we say, "Come, Lord Jesus!"
Amen.

HENRI J.M. NOUWEN

Our Sunday Visitor

Welcome All!

WEEKDAY MASSES
MONDAY—FRIDAY 8 AM

WEEKEND MASSES
SATURDAY | 4 PM
SUNDAY | 8:30 AM
10:30 AM

CONFESSIONS
SATURDAY | 3 PM — 3:50 PM
SUNDAY | 7:30 AM — 8:20 AM
10:00 AM — 10:20 AM

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FILL YOUR VALLEY, LEVEL YOUR MOUNTAIN

BY: Very Rev. Fr. John Louis

Often in Africa, a visit by a president to a remote village is preceded by the re-grading or up-grading of poor roads. Large pot-holes are filled and hilly portions are levelled. Similarly, when God, the King of kings, was to visit the Jews in exile in Babylon and lead them back to Jerusalem, His people had to prepare His way: "In the desert prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight ...a highway for the Lord! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low" (Isaiah 40:3-5). This, however, was not a call to work on the physical highway, but the spiritual road which went through the minds and hearts of God's people.

This message from Isaiah is quoted in Luke 3:1-6 (the gospel reading) to describe the work of John the Baptist. The Baptist came to prepare his people for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Beloved, you and I also have to prepare the roads of our lives to meet the Lord, whose birthday we are about to celebrate. The preparation involves filling the valleys in our lives and levelling our mountains. But what are the valleys and mountains in our lives? The Bible helps us to understand the valleys and mountains in our lives.

THE VALLEY

The physical valley is a fertile ground, a point by which an enemy invades a city or an abode of wild beasts.

Let us consider how these points relate to our spiritual valley.

FERTILE GROUND: The River that runs through the valley makes it fertile for growing crops. The valley, therefore, signifies material prosperity. Material riches can sometimes obscure our vision of God or dull our devotion to Him. Is the quest for prosperity, consciously or unconsciously, taking me away from God? If yes, then prosperity has become my valley.

POINT OF INVASION: A valley could be the point at which a city is invaded to conquer it. For instance, to defeat the city of Ai, Joshua went through the Jordan valley (Joshua 8) and it was in the Valley of Rephaim that David repeatedly defeated the Philistines (2 Sam 5:17-25). Therefore, the valley could signify our weak-point or weakness. Do we have some weaknesses in our lives? If yes, then these are some of the valleys which need to be filled.

ABODE OF WILD BEASTS: In the Jordan valley, there were bushy places taken over by wild beasts like lions, tigers and wolves. Such places were no-go areas for human beings. Are there places that Christians should not go that I go? These may be my valleys. Secondly, do I have wild tendencies or a temper? These may be my valleys that need to be filled.

MOUNTAIN

In the Bible, a mountain or hill is sometime a place or symbol of heathen sacrifice, the illusion of earthly glory or an obstacle to our goal.

HEATHEN SACRIFICE: The Bible condemned heathen or pagan sacrifices offered on mountains (Deut. 12:2), or the worship of idols which took place there (1 Kings 14:23; Jer. 2:20). Once again, is idol worship that which I have to deal with in my life as I prepare to celebrate the birthday of the Lord?

ILLUSION OF EARTHLY GLORY: Satan took Jesus to the mountain top to show Him the illusive glory of earth (Matt. 4:8). Thus, a mountain could symbolize illusive earthly glory, fame, wealth or power. Have I been seduced by any of these?

OBSTACLE TO OUR GOAL: As a mountain could prevent one from reaching a goal or prevent one from seeing what is beyond it, so it could signify those things in my life that prevent me from reaching my spiritual goals or obscure my vision of the glory of God. What are some of these things that I have to begin to clear from my life?

CONCLUSION

Beloved, in this season of Advent and beyond, may the Lord grant us abundant grace to fill every valley in our lives and to level every mountain as well. Amen!

RECONCILIATION

THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU

Prepare The Way For The Lord

Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered immediately after the 6pm Mass until the last person on Wednesday **December 15, 2021**.

*The Lord is kind and merciful
His mercy endures forever*



Catholic Daughters to Help the Needy

The Catholic Daughters are collecting new blankets, new toys, and gift cards for needy families in our diocese. Many families have lost everything due to Hurricane Ida, any way that you can help will be greatly appreciated. Items can be dropped off in the foyer of the annex before Mass from now through December 5th. All items are to be unwrapped. No donation is too small. Gift cards can be from retail stores, grocery stores, and/or restaurants. The Catholic Daughter motto is "Unity and Charity". Please unite with us as we provide these much needed items to the less fortunate. Thanks for your generosity.

CDA Christmas Meeting – December 9th

The annual CDA Christmas social will be held Thursday, December 9th at 6:30 pm. Catholic women age 18 and above are encouraged to attend the Pot Luck Finger Food Christmas Celebration. Members are reminded to bring items (blankets, toys, gift cards) to the December meeting. Ladies interested in joining the group should attend the December meeting or contact any officer for more details. Officers are Bernadette Mabile, Faie Duplantis, Bridget McElroy, Nina Billiot, and Mary Louviere.

TODAY'S READINGS

FIRST READING | (Baruch 5:1-9)

PSALM | (Psalm 126)

SECOND READING | (Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11)

GOSPEL | (Luke 3:1-6).

A DEEP CHANGE OF HEART

When John proclaimed a baptism of repentance, as today's Gospel relates, he called people to a deep change of heart. For John the Baptist, repentance was not simply regret for past failings, but a commitment to orient life around God's desires and purposes. What might living in alignment with God's desires look like? Our readings offer some clues. Baruch indicates that when mercy and justice are embraced like a royal garment, we may see the fruits of repentance. Paul notes how the Holy Spirit has been active within the church in Philippi, forming them to live in a loving and united community of faith, so they may witness to the love of God. And John himself suggests that a repentant heart clears a path for God to enter, leveling the mountains and valleys of our resistance, so that God might dwell within.

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PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Second Sunday of Advent
Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

REFLECTION QUESTION

What earthly undertakings do I need to set aside so
that I can set out to meet God's Son?

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FORGIVENESS

God forgives like a mother who kisses the offense
into everlasting forgiveness.

—Henry Ward Beecher

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

MONDAY | Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9-14; Lk 5:17-26

TUESDAY | Is 40:1-11; Ps 96:1-3, 10ac, 11-13; Mt 18:12-14

WEDNESDAY | Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

THURSDAY | Is 41:13-20; Ps 145:1, 9-13ab; Mt 11:11-15

FRIDAY | Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19

SATURDAY | Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Ps 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19; Mt 17:9a, 10-13

SUNDAY | Zep 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18

THE SANCTUARY LIGHT | IN MEMORY OF

December 5th—December 11th Brandon Filardo by Mom and Dad

MASS INTENTIONS

December 4th	4:00 PM	Claire Babin by Phyllis Ables and Family Jane and Gerald LeBoeuf by Phyllis Ables and Family
December 5th	8:30 AM	Ronnie Thomas by Michael and Sylvia Langlinais Patricia Olivier by Glynn Olivier In loving Memory of Laurie Hebert on her birthday by Mom and Dad
	10:30 AM	Ralph Melancon by Ava Percle
December 7th	8:00 AM	Lyn Samanie (DA) by Family
December 8th	8:00 AM	Leonard Pollet by Phyllis Ables and Family
December 11th	4:00 PM	Catherine Brown by Phyllis Ables and Family Kirk Dubois by Phyllis Ables and Family
December 12th	8:30 AM	Jimmy Coupel by Diana Bailly and Family Bessie Bailly by Darren and Teri Metrejean and Hayes and Diana Bailly Alfred LeBouef (DA) by Emily LeBouef
	10:30 AM	Ronnie Thomas by Steven and Brenda Arceneaux James Landry (DA) by Margaret and Burnelle Landry

PRAYER LINE

To be added to the prayer line, call Nina Richard at 446-1206 or the rectory at 446-6801. In the charity of your prayers, please pray for the sick, elderly, and homebound. Please pray for: Elaine Ables, Susan Arceneaux, Donnie Aucoin Jr, Jacob Aucoin, Jeannie Aucoin, Sara Aucoin, Elvin Babin, Tommy Badeaux, Chad Barrileaux, Ronnie Bednarz, Chuck Beebe, Gertrude Benoit, Fr. Paul Bergeron, Mitzy Bettridge, Gretchen Bilello, Preston Billiot, Alvin & Gail Blanchard, Dennis Blanchard, Ronald Blanchard, Lynn Bonneval, Aline Boudreaux, Delores Bourgeois, Emile "Jay" Bourgeois, Patricia Bourgeois, Connie Bouterie, Emma Del Broussard, Susan Caillouet, Gary & Sheila Cavalier, Bessie Chiasson, Randy Chiasson, Jane D. Clement Bryce Comeaux, Huey Cortez Sr., Martha Cortez, Randy Davis, Cary Davis, Jr., Dorothy Didier, Barbara & Ronni Duhon, Linda Ekiss, Avery "Brother" and Sonja Fonseca, Melissa Fontana Darin Fonz, Robin Ford, Marie Fournier, Alisa Frederick, Dante Galliano, Toby Gambarella, Leigh Ann Gardner, Carrie Gibbens Belinda Gil, Brandon Gil, George Gil, The Gil Family, Carrie Mae Givens, Austin Gros, Chad Gros, George Gros, Rosebella Gros, Kendra Guillot, Myles Harris, Joy Hebert, Katie Hebert, Jerrell Hebert, Sr., Cheryl Henderson, Jessie Hoffpauir, Samara Holland, Kristen Koppel, Eldine LaFleur, Jackson LaFleur, Mona Lambert, Elmay Landry, Joyce Landry, Craig Landry, Mark Landry, Barbara Nell Lapeyrouse, Allie LeBlanc, Emily LeBoeuf, Evelyn Leger, Tammy Babin Loney, Tim Long, Payton Martin, Keith Matherne, Rick Melancon, Asher Miller, Savannah Miller, Emma Mire, Bethany Moore, Meghan Naquin, Misty Naquin, Shannon Naquin, Eric Olivieri, Annie Ordoyne, Kara Pellegrin, Sherry Pennison, Lisa Pennison, Kenneth Pitre, James Pierce, Kip Pierce, Sharon Prejean, Ed Raidl, Kerri Reynolds, Bryce Richard, Ella Richard, Gladys Richard, Lorita Rodrigue, Susan Rodrigue, Cynthia Rogers, Danielle Samanie, Chester Sanchez, Karla Saunier, Kathy Savoie, Earline Simmoneaux, Penny Simmons, Brenda Sonier, Mike Stegall, Louis Stevens, Melissa Tardiff, Trish Templet, Pierre & Mary Theriot, Cammie Thibodaux, Lacey Thibodaux, Thibodaux Family, Chris Touns, Joyce Touns, Ricky Turner, Sara Day Vignes, Allison Walters, and Wanda Wawrose, Freddie Webre, Mike Wiley, Anna Wooten. **Please notify the office when names can be removed.**

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