

Sunday between 11 and 17 December
Third Sunday of Advent (Year B)

First Reading - Isaiah 61.1-2, 10-11

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord God
is upon me,
for the Lord has anointed me
to bring good news
to the poor, the lowly, and the afflicted;
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to bind up
the broken-hearted,
and to comfort
those who mourn;
to declare
the day of God's justice,
and the year of the Lord's favour.
So let us rejoice,
and sing praise
to the Lord our God.
For as bride and groom
are prepared in fine clothes
for their wedding,
so the Lord
has clothed us
with salvation and righteousness.
And as a garden
flourishes in the spring-time,
so the Lord God
will make righteousness
and praise
flourish in every nation.
This is the word of the Lord.

Second Reading - 1 Thessalonians 5.16-23

A reading from the first letter of Paul
to the Thessalonians.

This is the will of God for you
in Christ Jesus:
that you
rejoice always,
give thanks in all circumstances,
and pray without ceasing.
Do not quench the Spirit,
and do not treat prophecies
with contempt;
but test everything.
Hold fast
to all that is good,
and keep away
from all that is evil.
And may the God of peace
keep you in holiness,
in body, mind, and spirit,
for the coming
of our Lord Jesus Christ.
This is the word of the Lord.

Gospel - John 1.6-8, 19-28

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John.
John himself
was not
the light,
but came
to bear witness
to the light.
The temple authorities
in Jerusalem
sent a delegation
to the place
where John was baptising.
They demanded
of John, 'Who are you?'
And John
told them plainly, 'I am not
the Messiah.'
So they asked him, 'What then?
Are you Elijah?
Are you the prophet?'
And when John
said that he was not,
they asked him again, 'Who are you?
Let us have an answer
for those who sent us!
What do you say about yourself?'
And John said
(using the words of the prophet Isaiah),
'I am the voice
crying out
in the wilderness,
"Make straight
the way of the Lord."
They asked him, 'Then why
are you baptising,
if you are not
the Messiah,
and not Elijah,
and not the prophet?'
And John answered them, 'I baptise in water,
but amongst you
stands one
you do not know,
the one who is
coming after me;
and I am not worthy
even to be
his servant.'
This is the Gospel of the Lord.