



CELEBRATING AT HOME
2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Prepare a way for the Lord (Luke 3:1-6)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

We are gathered with the whole Church in this moment of prayer.

Preparing to hear the Word

In this holy season of Advent
we prayerfully prepare to discover again
the great gift Christ is to us.

God bids us:

**“Prepare a way for the Lord in the desert,”
so that all may know God’s healing presence,
for our God is full of tenderness and love,
like a shepherd towards his flock.**

Lighting of the second Advent candle

Lord Jesus Christ, you are already in our midst,
yet we long for you to come more fully and more
deeply into our hearts.

Give us patience and hope
as we prepare for your coming.

In the desert of our fear and anxiety,
your light is calm and strong.

In the wilderness of violence and despair,
your light is peace and hope.

In the desert of narrow, darkened alleys,
your light lets us see to build anew.

In the wilderness of our hearts,
you light up our way as we prepare for you.

May this candle remind us of your presence,
**which enlightens our minds,
and warms our hearts,
and shows us the way,
as we gather in the circle of its light.**

As the candle is lit, all say:

Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus!

Scripture Reading (Luke 3:1-6)

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar’s reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Every valley will be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
winding ways will be straightened
and rough roads made smooth.

And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

Reflection - Prepare a way for the Lord

The sense of *preparing* is very strong in our readings this weekend. The Gospel highlights the role of John the Baptist as the one who prepares the way for Jesus. It was John’s ministry of preaching and baptism which laid the foundation for Jesus’ ministry. The idea of repentance has less to do with feeling sorry for individual sins and more to do with turning around and facing in a new direction. John’s call to the people was to turn away from the old way of life and to turn towards God.

The first reading from the prophet Baruch is a call to do the same. It talks about taking off the dress of sorrow and distress and putting on the beauty and glory of God. It’s a call for the people to become God’s people. God will lower the mountains and smooth the way so that God’s people can walk in safety, guided by God’s light and escorted by mercy and integrity.

In the Gospel, Luke refers to a similar text found in the writings of the prophet Isaiah. Making straight paths for the Lord can be understood as the radical change of behaviour away from sin and towards God.

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The loving action of God gently fills in the valleys and lowers the mountains and straightens and smooths the roads so that we can be fully open to the living and transforming presence of Jesus so that 'all mankind shall see the salvation of God' in and through us.

Our Advent readings help us realise God's profound love for us and his presence within us through the Holy Spirit. Knowing that God will always treat us with love and tender care helps us to turn again towards him and to trust in the depth of his mercy.

Our Advent journey is showing us how to prepare our hearts for a fresh discovery of God's presence in our lives; how to recognise the hidden presence of Jesus among and around us; how to turn around and face towards God with faith, hope and love; and how to be the living presence of Jesus in our moment of history.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus, we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Blessing

May the Lord bless us,
**keep us from all evil
and lead us to life everlasting.**
Amen.

The Season of Advent

The word "advent" means appearing, arrival, to come. Advent is the Church's time of preparation for celebrating God's gift of his Son. Our liturgy will gather the great Advent themes of hope, expectation and preparation. During Advent we recall Christ's coming at Bethlehem and we look forward to his second coming at the end of time. Advent is a season of joyful expectation.

Advent has two parts. The first two Sundays focus on preparing for Jesus' return at the end of time. The second two Sundays focus on preparing to celebrate the anniversary of Jesus' birth.

The Gospels of the Sundays in Advent have four great movements
1. Stay Awake! 2. Prepare! 3. Rejoice! and 4. Receive!

Advent is a journey from
Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!
to
Emmanuel. God-is-with-us!

*Light and
Love in the
darkness*



This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



The Carmelites
Australia & Timor-Leste

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