



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Yr B

## Lectio Divina

**Lectio:** Our text is the first verses of Mark's Gospel i.e. the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God<sup>1</sup>. It is Mark's 'preamble' which, typical of Mark's Gospel, is brief and concise. Jesus comes from Nazareth to be baptized by John in the next verse. *The Jewish people versed in Scripture, had a very strong consciousness of sin and so, they were open to hearing John when he spoke of seeking God's forgiveness. Actually, not everyone was ready to change.*<sup>2</sup> In this context, referring to John the Baptist cues the readers to read on and discover the Good News of forgiveness. John the Baptist's role was to prepare for the coming of the Messiah. However, to be 'ready to change' and recognize the Messiah and believe and follow him, we must begin with repentance; clearing our minds and lives to accept the new way of the Messiah. John proclaims: prepare the way through repentance! Jesus, the Messiah, will make possible a new way through the Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup> The challenge is to be changed so as to take up the new way of the Holy Spirit.

**Read: Mark 1: 1 - 8**

**Meditatio:** Am I more than 'staying awake' for the coming of the Lord but actively<sup>4</sup> preparing for his coming? Is my faith 'in my head' only and not in my actions? How would I explain what the 'Good News'<sup>5</sup> is? Why is the Good News, good? What do I hope for through my faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God? How important for me is God's forgiveness? Who are the prophets of God in my world, my life? Do I listen to the voices of prophets? Do I follow a straight path to the Lord? What needs to be straightened out in my life? In what ways can I be changed as a follower of Jesus through the Season of Advent? Am I seeking forgiveness as all the people sought the baptism of repentance from John the Baptist? Am I aware of my sinfulness? Do I celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation often enough? Are there ways of penance that will help me prepare for Christmas reflecting the life of penance that John the Baptist lived? Are there ways I could fast as a preparation for Christmas as John lived simply from the land? Do I appreciate how great it is to have a relationship with Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Is my baptism for me a continuing gift of the Holy Spirit? Am I open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit? Do I hold back from following Christ in all things? Is sin, even venial sin, blocking me from following Jesus completely? In what ways could Jesus work better through me and my life?

**Oratio:** Pray that all may know the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. May the Gospel be spread throughout the World. Pray for honest reflection on our lives during Advent. Pray for a clear understanding of the real dangers of sin. Pray that we will listen to the messengers of God in whatever guise they come to us. Pray that we will put our faith into action. Pray for courage to turn to the Lord who is always ready to forgive. Pray for those who have a fear of confessing their sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Pray that the feasting of Christmas may be better appreciated by some preparation of fasting during Advent. Pray in thanks for the gift of Baptism. Pray for the nations surrounding the river Jordan. Pray for an openness to the workings of the Holy Spirit in and through us. Pray for a renewal in the practice of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Pray for peace through forgiveness between nations. Pray that we will prepare for Christmas. Pray that Christmas may be a time of gathering with families in thanks to God. Pray that we can come out of the wilderness of this Pandemic after due preparation. Pray for a realization of the miracle of Christmas – the Son of God is come among us in Jesus Christ. Pray: Come, Lord Jesus.

**Contemplatio** – Dwell in stillness, simply aware of the boundless expanse of mercy that surrounds you.

**After your prayer** — Put preparation in Advent into actions. Consider looking at your food consumption; keep it simple and natural in Advent.<sup>6</sup>

✍ Fr Joe

## **Mark 1: 1 – 8**

**The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ,  
the Son of God.**

**It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:**

**Look, I am going to send my messenger before you:  
he will prepare your way.**

**A voice cries in the wilderness:**

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

**and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the  
wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the  
forgiveness of sins.**

**All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their  
way to him, and as they were baptized by him in the  
river Jordan they confessed their sins.**

**John wore a garment of camel-skin, and lived on  
locusts and wild honey.**

**In the course of his preaching he said, ‘Someone is  
following me, someone who is more powerful than I am,  
and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his  
sandals. I have baptized you with water, but he will  
baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’**

Notes:

**1** Mark keeps connecting with the Cross. It was at the Cross that the Centurion acclaimed: “Truly, this man was the Son of God.” (Mk15:39b)

**2** From footnotes on Lk 3:3 of the Christian Community Bible, pastoral edn 1988

**3** The Holy Spirit enables forgiveness. Whether or not the working of the Holy Spirit is understood, true repentance is a gift of the Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments.

**4** Mark’s Gospel is primarily about the activities of Jesus. He does not have Jesus explaining his actions at any length. John’s Gospel explains Jesus’ actions at great length.

**5** Good News might be called: **Good Spelling** or Gospel.

**6** You could support the spreading of the Good News through the actions of StVdeP and the Melbourne Overseas Mission through their Appeals at this time.