

waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

■ The word of the Lord.

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 3:4, 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

### GOSPEL

Mk 1: 1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

*Make straight the paths of the Lord.*

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 baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he 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 baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

### A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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# Breaking Open the Word

## IN THE WILDERNESS

In Australia we experience the desert and wilderness in all its beauty and expanse, yet it can be a lonely, dangerous place. Today we hear a voice crying out in the wilderness in the time of Isaiah and echoed in the Gospel. This voice also cries out to us today, in the wilderness and the desert of our lives. The voice is consolation: "Console, console my people" (Is 40:1). It bellows, "In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Is 40:3). Isaiah's words create an image of the landscape of our life and soul, in need of God.

The Gospel engages this imagery for John the Baptist, a guide in the wilderness who heralds the Messiah. Mark gives name to the voice just as he identified that this writing is "The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1). Although the name of Isaiah is invoked, the first quote is from Malachi "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way (1:2 cf. Mal 3:1); then comes the echo from Isaiah 40:3. Here in the wilderness John announces the one who is to come who will baptise with the Holy Spirit (Mark 7-8). This is the announcement of the Messiah, the one longed for. As we hear that voice in our wilderness, we know that Jesus is with us. We can reflect on our attention to his presence and our welcome to him in our souls and lives.

Dr Rosemary Canavan



# THE SAVING WORD

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT / B

10 DECEMBER 2023

## FIRST READING

Isa 40:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

*Prepare the way for the Lord.*

'Console my people, console them' says your God.

'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her

that her time of service is ended,

that her sin is atoned for,

that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord.

Make a straight highway for our God across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in,

every mountain and hill be laid low,

let every cliff become a plain,

and the ridges a valley;

then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed

and all mankind shall see it;

for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain,

joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice,

joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear,

say to the towns of Judah,

'Here is your God.'

Here is the Lord coming with power,

his arm subduing all things to him.

The prize of his victory is with him,

his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,

gathering lambs in his arms,

holding them against his breast

and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

■ The word of the Lord.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 84:9-14. R. v. 8

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

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,/

a voice that speaks of peace,/ peace for his

people./ His help is near for those who fear

him/ and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**



2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;/ justice and peace have embraced./ Faithfulness shall spring from the earth/ and justice look down from heaven. **R.**

3. The Lord will make us prosper/ and our earth shall yield its fruit./ Justice shall march before him/ and peace shall follow his steps. **R.**

## SECOND READING

2 Pet 3:8-14

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

*We wait for new heavens and a new earth.*

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised; the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are

10 Dec 23  
Wk 2 Advent Yr B

**WELCOME TO ST PATRICK'S CHURCH**  
**Website:** <https://stpatrikswesttamworthparish.org>  
**Email:** [westtamworthparish@armidale.catholic.org.au](mailto:westtamworthparish@armidale.catholic.org.au)




**Parish Priest** Fr Anthony Koppman  
**Pastoral Associate:** Sr Kathryn Sweeney RSJ.  
**Administration** Di Bolitho, Anne Bowden  
**Sacristan** Elaine Smyth  
**School Principals** Greg O'Toole and Maree Holland

**Office Hrs:** Wed & Thurs 8.30-11.30 am  
**Presbytery** 67658211  
**Pastoral Associate** 0411703608  
**St Josephs School** 67654079

**WEEKEND MASSES**  
**WEEKDAY MASSES**

**Sat:** 5.30 pm **Sun:** 9 am **Sun:** 5 pm  
**Wed:** 12 noon  
**Thur:** 9 am Mass **Fri:** 12 noon Mass



**CONFESSIONS**  
**Sat:** 4.30-5.00 pm  
\*Or by appointment

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:** O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of His voice heard in the joy of your heart.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:** Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God


**May God have mercy on all those asked to be remembered in prayer:**

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Cathie Menck, Sr Iris Fittler rsj, Jacqueline Galvin, Father Morrie Clarke.


**ANNIVERSARIES:** Richard Bowler (1/12), Perce McInnes (2/12), John Paul Vella (4/12), Lawrence Vella (23/1), Anna Chu.

**DECEASED:** Hugh and Dalis O'Brien, John O'Brien, Raphael, Evita and Philomena Smith, Peter Nally, Fr John Carey, Sandra Sheedy, Frank Koppman (Fr Anthony's Dad).

**SICK:** Elaine Murray, Pauline Miller, Monica Austin, Margaret Doyle, Baby Walker MacAlpine, John Betts, Gerard Dunn, Sr Gerard Joseph, Shane Davidson, Joan Crowe, Lisa Foster, Norma O'Brien, Terry Dean, Barbara Brennan, Colin MacPherson, Graeme Bussell, Kate Harrison, Maureen Harrison, Deacon Peter Harrison, Alison and baby Huxley Gallagher, William Bonner, Fr Bernie Flood, Pauline Wiley.


**VEENA'S VERSIONS**


Why did John the Baptist take his shoes off before going into the water? He wanted to save soles!



**CHURCH COLLECTIONS:** **BSB 082 105**  
**1st. Collection West Tamworth Presbytery** (Diocesan collection) Acc No: 001023642  
**2nd Collection West Tamworth Church** (St Pats Church ) Acc No:001041198

**COMING EVENTS:**  
**Dec 14** Christmas Reconciliation  
**Dec 24** Christmas Eve Mass 6pm  
**Dec 17** Parish Advent/Christmas Morning Tea after 9 am mass  
**Dec 25** Christmas 9am Mass

**St Nicholas, the origin of Santa Claus, was a real person, a bishop in the church in the fourth century. St Nicholas was born in Patara (Asia Minor) and later moved to Myra (Demre in modern Turkey), where he was elected bishop. He died on Dec. 6 sometime between A. D. 326 and 341. Many stories have been told of his generosity. In Saint Nicholas' time, he secretly helped a family with some money by delivering gold to their home during the dark of the night. One man found out and when asked was told it was much better to give in secret when no one knows it is you. He didn't want to be praised for his generosity. He gave for the joy of giving. After that, anonymous gifts of charity often were attributed to Saint Nicholas.**

*"Rest assured that I shall not forget any of you ". (1899)*



**BAMBINELLI SUNDAY:** The Blessing of baby Jesus figures will be held this weekend at the Saturday evening, Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon masses. Please bring along figures or other images you would like blessed..

**UKRAINE ADVENT APPEAL:** A special Advent collection will be held this weekend for donations to be transferred to the Ukraine Catholic Church in Australia to remit to the charity, Mudra Sprava (Wise Action). The organisation has 3 focus areas: Evacuations from frontline territories; Food packages for those in need; Shelters for internally displaced persons. Please come prepared and keep those people in the Ukraine & Russia in your prayers.

**ADVENT PREPARATION:** As the end of the year speeds to a conclusion there is always much to do and prepare for. If you will be away over the Christmas period and unable to fulfil your commitments such as reading, preparation, cleaning and counting etc could you please notify the parish of your dates of unavailability so rosters may be prepared accordingly. Thank you  
How long till Christmas : <https://www.timeanddate.com/countdown/christmas>  
try this link in your browser (14 days this Sunday).

**CHRISTMAS EVENTS AT ST PATRICKS:** Please note in your calendars the dates of our Christmas events happening soon. Second Rite of Reconciliation Thursday 14 December at 5.30 pm; Parish Morning Tea 17 December after 9am mass—please bring a plate if you are able to. Christmas Eve mass at 6 pm is the Vigil Mass for Christmas Day and will not meet your Sunday mass obligation for the weekend.

**IMMACULATA MISSION SCHOOL 2024: FISHERS OF MEN:** Start the new year by going deeper in God's love through awesome speakers on the Catholic faith, daily Mass, Adoration and the Rosary, praise and worship, fellowship and more! There are two different programs, -Youth & adults (14 years & up): 1-6 Jan. 2024 Married couples & families (specifically designed for married couples. Includes children's and teens program): 7-10 Jan 2024. Special guest speakers: Dan & Stephanie Burke from the USA (co-founders of the Avila Institute, presenters on EWTN. Dan is an author of over 15 books on Catholic spirituality), plus Fr Francesco Gavazzi (from the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal). Held: NEGS (New England Girls' School), Armidale NSW. For costs, additional information and to register visit: <http://www.immaculata.org.au/ims>

**PRAYER FOR OUR NEW BISHOP**


God our Father, in Jesus, your Son,  
You have given to your Church the perfect model of priest,  
prophet and king, and so You have blessed us through His sacrifice,  
taught us through His Word, and guided us through His rule.  
We ask You, Father, to guide and enlighten those who will be tasked  
with helping to choose the next bishop of our diocese.  
May the person they choose be one of deep and true prayer,  
a person of a compassionate heart and firm resolve,  
and a person of joy and peace, who desires above all to do Your will.  
We entrust our prayers to our Patroness, Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary,  
and ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen

**WEEK 5 ROSTER: 10/12/23**

**Vigil:** R C Ledwos, D Bolitho  
**9am Sun:** R J Ryan, G Clout  
**5.00pm Sun:** R J Murray A O'Halloran  
**Counting Team** P Sheils, A Bowden  
**Fri Cleaning** S Brown V Griffiths  
**Altar Linen:** H Reid

**WEEK 6 ROSTER: 17/12/23**

**Vigil:** R D Gowing, G Styman  
**9am Sun:** R S Brown, A Sartori  
**5.00pm Sun:** R M Murray D Bearman  
**Counting Team** G & M Thrift, A Bowden  
**Fri Cleaning** K O'Brien M Brown  
**Altar Linen:** J Hutt

We acknowledge the First Nations people who have walked upon and care for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of First Nations people to this land and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

