

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

*Are you the one who is to come, or must we wait for someone else?*

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way before you. I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

### ■ The Gospel of the Lord.

#### A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT / A

14 DECEMBER 2025

### THE ONE WHO IS TO COME

Today's Gospel focus continues with John the Baptist, introduced to us last Sunday. From prison he sends his followers to Jesus to find out if he is the 'one who is to come or have we to wait for someone else?' This question picks up an early memory that some thought John might have been the Messiah. Jesus explicates his Messianic credentials to John's enquirers: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear and the dead raised to life. In other words, Jesus affirms that he is the one who brings restoration, community and healing. Jesus' self-identification further affirms the blessedness of those who remain faithful to him.

In the biblical world, 'faith' was another way of affirming fidelity and commitment to another. This leads Jesus to attest, in this spirit of fidelity and commitment, John's prophetic mission of desert ascetism and preparation for the coming of the Messiah. As we come into these final days before Christmas, our role becomes like John: we align ourselves in fidelity and faith to the one who is to be born, who will bring healing and hope to our world that struggles to know this.

But we also hear Jesus' affirming words – the final sentence in today's Gospel passage addressed to us. Despite John's greatness as the one who prepares for the coming of Jesus, 'yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he'. The Gospel's audience, including us, are affirmed. We have unique status in the eyes of God. This divine promise accompanies us in the days ahead.

Fr Michael Trainor

### FIRST READING

Isa 35:1-6, 10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah  
*God himself will come and save us.*

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult, let the wasteland rejoice and bloom, let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil, let it rejoice and sing for joy.

The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God.

Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and say to all faint hearts, 'Courage! Do not be afraid.'

'Look your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy, for those the Lord has ransomed shall return. They will come to Zion shouting for joy, everlasting joy in their faces; joy and gladness will go with them and sorrow and lament be ended.

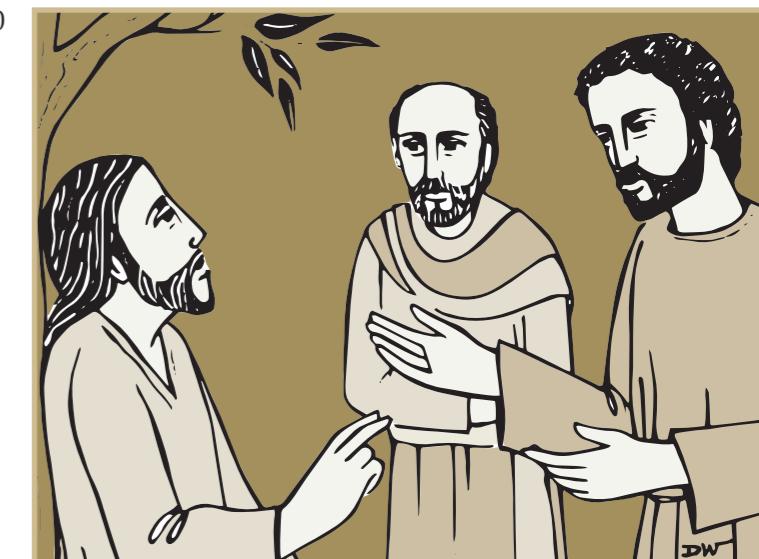
### ■ The word of the Lord.

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 145:6-10. R. cf. Isa 35:4

**R. Lord, come and save us. (or Alleluia!)**

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, / who is just to those who are oppressed. / It is he who gives bread to the hungry, / the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **R.**

2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, / who raises up those who are bowed down, / the Lord, who protects the stranger / and upholds the widow and orphan. **R.**



3. It is the Lord who loves the just / but thwarts the path of the wicked. / The Lord will reign for ever, / Zion's God, from age to age. **R.**

### SECOND READING

James 5:7-10

A reading from the letter of St James  
*You also must be patient; do not lose heart, the Lord's coming will be soon.*

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

### ■ The word of the Lord.

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Isa 61:1; Lk 4:18

Alleluia, alleluia!  
The spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.  
Alleluia!

14 December 2025

3rd Sunday Advent - Yr A

## WELCOME TO ST PATRICK'S CHURCH

Website: <https://stpatrickswesttamworthparish.org>

Email: [westtamworthparish@armidale.catholic.org.au](mailto:westtamworthparish@armidale.catholic.org.au)



**Parish Administrator** Fr Saji Kappikuzhi

**Office Administration** Sheryl Brown, Di Bolitho

**Sacristan** Elaine Smyth

**School Principals** Greg O'Toole & Maree Holland

### OFFICE HOURS:

Mon & Fri: 9.30 am - 1.30pm

**Presbytery** 67658211

St Josephs School 67654079

**WEEKEND MASSES** Sat: 5.30 pm Sun: 9 am & 5 pm

**WEEKDAY MASSES** Mon: 9am Tues: 9am Wed: 12noon

Thurs: 9am Fri: 12noon



### CONFESIONS

\* Sat: 4.30-5.00pm

\* Before weekly Mass

\* By appointment

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed the Lord is near.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:** Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.



### Third Advent Candle - Prayer for Joy

**Priest:** The third candle of Advent is the Candle of Joy. It reminds us of the joy that Mary felt when the angel Gabriel told her that a special child would be born to her - a child who would save and deliver his people.

**All:** Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us today. Help us prepare our hearts for this gift. Bless our worship. Help us to hear and to do your word. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. Amen.

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

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Laurie Brodbeck, Barry Borham, Eric Chu, Justin Blanch.

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Ian Macpherson (30/11), Richard Bowler (1/12), Perce McInnes (2/12), John Paul Vella (4/12), Rod, Kelly (20/01), Lawrence Vella (23/01).

**DECEASED:** We pray for our loved ones now in God's care, Margaret Hudson, Barry Lane, Norma Simmonds, Vincent Pendergast, Phil Eather, John Galloway, Patrick McBrearty.

**SICK:** Sienna Baker, May Press, John Betts, Norma O'Brien, Elaine Murray, Shane Davidson, Sr Cecilia Pistacchio, Judy Murphy, Monica Austin, Daphne Sweeney, Brian Rodway, Lisa Bond, John Ryan, Yvonne Tarrant, Bill Dennis, Barry McNamara, Jeanette Whale, Carmel Koppman, Barbara Brennan, Eileen Hudson, Rose Pace.

### COMING EVENTS:

16 Dec: Parish Christmas Lunch - Calala Inn, 12noon

18 Dec: Second Rite of Reconciliation - 6.00pm

24 Dec: Christmas Vigil Mass - 6pm

25 Dec: Christmas Day Mass - 9am

26 Dec: Boxing Day Mass - 12noon

11 Jan: Farewell Morning Tea for Fr Saji

**COLLECTIONS: BSB: 082 105**

Account Name: West Tamworth Catholic - 'Church' Or 'Presbytery'

1st. Collection: For Armidale Diocese Clergy: 001023642 (Presbytery Account- for the Diocese)

2nd Collection: For St. Patrick's Church: 001041198 (Church Account - for St Patricks)

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR A

## WELCOME TO ALL THOSE JOINING US AT ST PATRICKS.

### CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24 December - 6 PM

Christmas Day, Thursday 25 December - 9 AM.

*Please note no evening mass in Tamworth on Christmas Day.*

Second Rite of Reconciliation:

Thursday, 18th December at 6pm.



**SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION:** This important part of our Christmas celebrations will be held at St Patrick's on **Thursday, 18th December at 6pm**. Several visiting priests will also be in attendance.

**PARISH CHRISTMAS LUNCH:** Our annual Parish Christmas celebration will be held this Tuesday, 16th December at the Calala Inn, starting at 12noon. Numbers have now been supplied, however, there will be room for one or two more if you wish to attend.

**ADVENT PREPARATION:** If you are away over the Christmas period and unable to fulfil your volunteer commitments, could you please notify the parish of your dates of unavailability so rosters may be prepared accordingly. The Christmas Roster is now being formulated.

**COLLECTION OF USED STAMPS:** Thank you to all who have saved stamps on behalf of Mary MacKillop Today and missions in Peru. \$18,330.00 was raised this year - a great effort by many people. This year, fewer stamps were received as the digital world takes hold. Our total since 2001 is \$575,830. Support this year was provided to students and schools in Puno and Junin regions through Sister Charo. For over 30 years, the Sisters of Saint Joseph have had an active presence in Peru. Each year, through small grants, the Sisters on the ground work to provide support to communities in need. Used stamps, with a good border margin, can be left in the box provided at the back of the church

**FAREWELL MORNING TEA FOR FATHER SAJI:** To show our appreciation, a morning tea will be held for Fr Saji on Sunday 11th January 2026, after 9am Mass. More details to come.

### ROSTER FOR: 14/12/25

Vigil:	R: D. Gowing, N Pullman	Gifts:	B & M Watson
9am Sun:	R: S Brown J Woodbridge	Gifts:	G & U McKay
5pm Sun:	R: A O'Halloran T Mitchell	Gifts:	Volunteer
Counting:	M. Vella, A. Bowden	Altar Linen:	J. Hutt
Fri Cleaning	J. Hutt, J. Moran		

### ROSTER FOR: 21/12/25

Vigil:	R: C Ledwos D Bolitho	Gifts:	S. Shulze, V. Griffiths
9am Sun:	R: M Holley R Paull	Gifts:	Michelle & Sally
5.00pm Sun:	R: S. Brown, Volunteer	Gifts:	Volunteer
Counting Team :	A. Bowden, S. Brown	Altar Linen:	M. Vella
Fri Cleaning	M. Vella, I. Ullman		

*We acknowledge the First Nations people who have walked upon and cared 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.*

