

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 8:30 am

COLLECT

God of power and mercy, you call us once again to celebrate the coming of your Son. Remove those things which hinder love of you, that when he comes, he may find us waiting in awe and wonder for him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them

shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. *ISAIAH 61:1-4, 8-11*

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CANTICLE REFRAIN

My Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. **R**

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. **R**

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. **R** He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. **R**

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever. **R**

Glory to the Father, and the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

CANTICLE 18, BAS (LUKE 1:47-55)

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO JOHN

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to

the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Merciful God, may this eucharist free us from our sins, fill us with unending joy, and prepare us for the birthday of our Saviour. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is Lord now and for ever. **Amen.**