

# The Living Word

Second Sunday of Advent, Year B

6 December 2020

## First Reading Is 40:1-5. 9-11

*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 all 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.

## 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 Pt 3:8-14

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

## 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!**

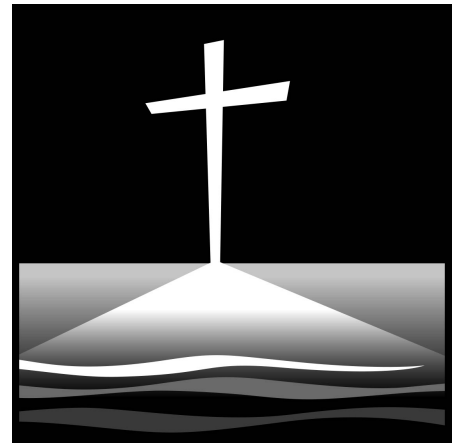
## Gospel Mk 1:1-8

*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.'



## Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

John immersed, baptised, his followers in water, symbolising the washing away of the sins of the past. But he could not empower people by drenching them in the dynamic life of God. John anticipates 'Someone' (not named!) who *does* have the power to inundate, baptise, people with the Holy Spirit.

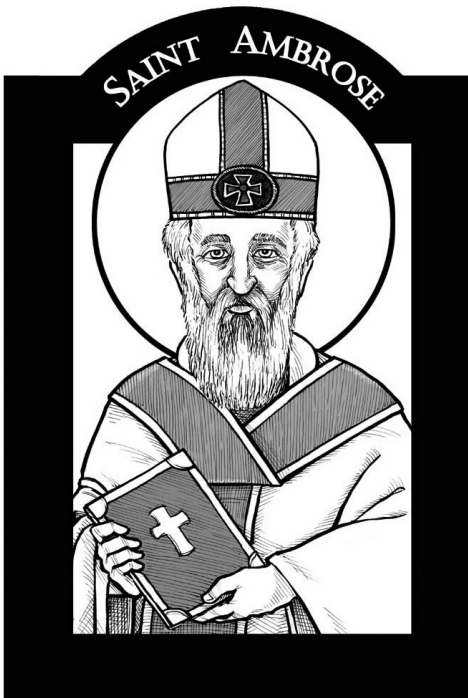
From the heading of St Mark's Gospel, we know that that 'Someone' is 'Jesus Christ, Son of God' who came to flood our lives with that Divine Power which can effect a completely new *future* for humanity.

That is why St Mark took the term 'gospel' (good news) which was used on inscriptions announcing an Emperor's birth or victory, and used it to describe his inspired rendering of the mission of Jesus Christ, which was to inaugurate the 'Kingdom of God', overcoming the pretensions of all Emperors of any kind throughout history.

We could pause for a moment to thank God for the Good News of our being baptised with *water* in the 'Name of the Father and of the Son and of the *Holy Spirit*.'

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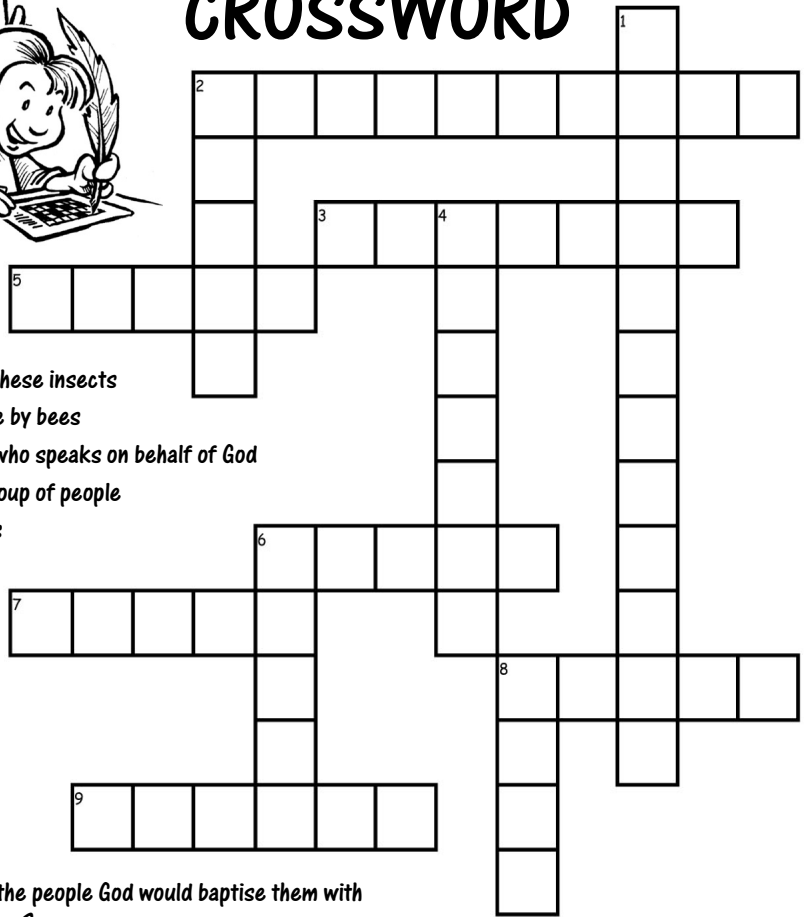
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**S**t Ambrose was born at Trier in 334 AD. While practising law he was appointed governor of the province of Aemilia and Liguria. Four years later when the see of Milan became vacant, St Ambrose was chosen as the new bishop, despite the fact that he was not even baptised. He reluctantly accepted the position, was baptised, ordained a priest and then installed as bishop. In 390 AD, after Emperor Theodosius ordered the savage massacre of many people, St Ambrose impressed upon the Emperor to perform a public penance for this act of cruelty. St Ambrose is listed as one of the four great Latin doctors of the church. He was a great orator who gave sermons that offered practical teachings for his people. He was also the first teacher in the West to make significant use of hymns as a popular means of praise.



# CROSSWORD



## Down

- 1: John ate these insects
- 2: food made by bees
- 4: a person who speaks on behalf of God
- 6: a large group of people
- 8: bad deeds

## Across

- 2: John told the people God would baptise them with the H \_ \_ \_ S \_ \_ \_ \_
- 3: John the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ baptised people in the Jordan River
- 5: people came from this place to see John
- 6: John's clothes were made of hair of this animal
- 7: what John used to baptise people
- 8: what we say when we apologise
- 9: John the Baptist baptised people in this river

## The prophet Isaiah wrote:

"I am \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ my  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ahead of you,  
 who will \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ your way;  
 the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ of one \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ out  
 in the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ :  
 'Prepare the \_ \_ \_ of the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ,  
 make his paths \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ,'"

crying  
 straight  
 way  
 voice  
 sending  
 prepare  
 wilderness  
 messenger  
 Lord