



Worship resources

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

Isaiah 61 : 1-4, 8-11

All the Advent lessons look towards the coming of the Lord. Here are verses Jesus applied to himself, as the one who brought liberty, justice, and gladness to the world.

The Psalm - Psalm 126 or Magnificat

1 Thessalonians 5 : 16-24

The Advent season rightly has a sombre tone, reflecting our serious preparation and self-examination. But joy keeps breaking in, and Paul ends this letter in that spirit. Waiting for the Lord is a time of joy, prayer, and thankfulness.

John 1 : 6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God. Before Jesus there came John the Baptist, witnessing to the light of the world, pointing beyond himself to the One who stands among us as God incarnate.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Isaiah%2061:%201-4,%208-11%0Acw%20Psalm%20126%0A1%20Thessalonians%205:%2016-24%0AJohn%201:%206-8,%2019-28

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

O Lord Jesu Christ,
who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger
to prepare thy way before thee;

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Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way,
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at thy second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight,
who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
ever one God, world without end.

Almighty God,
Give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness,
and put upon us the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which thy Son Jesus Christ
came to visit us in great humility;
that in the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty
to judge both the quick and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who liveth and reigneth with thee
and the Holy Spirit, now and ever.

This collect is said after the Collect of the day until Christmas Eve.

Collect Two

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger
to prepare your way before you:
Grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

As we wait on the Lord and God's precious grace and mercy, let us bring
our own needs and those of others before God saying "Great things have
been done

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for us," and responding "Holy is God's name!"

A: We give thanks for the goodness of God we experience in the Church.

Guide our

bishop _____, and all the leaders of the Church. May your Spirit be poured out

upon us all that we may announce the coming of God's reign.

Great things have been done for us,

Holy is God's name!

We pray for our Government and Parliament. Guide our leaders and people to generosity and concern for others that no one will be forced to live in

poverty in this blessed land.

Great things have been done for us,

Holy is God's name!

We pray for those in prisons and for those who work with them, that bitterness

and despair may not overtake them. For those who work as chaplains and volunteers, we give thanks and ask that you call more of your people to concern for

prisoners, remembering the example of the prophets and apostles and the words of

Jesus.

Great things have been done for us,

Holy is God's name!

For those who are afflicted with sickness or fatigue, we pray that your word would be true for them. Strengthen weak hands and knees. Take away fears.

Make

sorrow and sadness flee away.

Great things have been done for us,

Holy is God's name!

Give us patience as we await your coming and continue in our daily work and preparations for the celebrations to come. Keep us from grumbling and let our hearts be strong in the knowledge that the Lord is near.

Great things have been done for us,

Holy is God's name!

Bring to your faithful people, the ransomed of the Lord, your joy as we wait.

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May our prayers and praise keep us in the Way of Light with all your saints and martyrs. **Amen.**

As we wait with joy for Jesus Christ, the one who is to come, let us offer prayers to God who sent his Son as the true light into the world.

For the peace of the world, and for our unity in Christ.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

Come, O Lord, and save us.

For *N* our bishop and all bishops, for the presbyters, for the deacons and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.

Come, O Lord, and save us.

For the church throughout the world and the faithful in every place.

Come, O Lord, and save us.

For the leaders of the nations and all in authority.

Come, O Lord, and save us.

For justice, peace, and freedom among peoples of the earth.

Come, O Lord, and save us.

For travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for the hungry and the oppressed, and for those in prison.

Come, O Lord, and save us.

For the dying and the dead.

Come, O Lord, and save us.

For our deliverance from all affliction, strife, and need.

Come, O Lord, and save us.

Joining our voices with John the Baptist, and all the saints and angels of God, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ. **To you, O Lord.**

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O Emmanuel, our king and lawgiver, desire of all nations and Savior of all peoples, come and save us, O Lord our God. Glory to you for ever. **Amen**

POST COMMUNION

Father,
we give you thanks for these heavenly gifts.
Kindle us with the fire of your Spirit
that when Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

PRAYERS

God of hope,
you call us home from the exile of selfish oppression
to the freedom of justice,
the balm of healing,
and the joy of sharing.
Make us strong to join you in your holy work,
as friends of strangers and victims,
companions of those whom others shun,
and as the happiness of those whose hearts are broken.
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

God of joy and exultation,
you strengthen what is weak;
you enrich the poor
and give hope to those who live in fear.
Look upon our needs this day.
Make us grateful for the good news of salvation
and keep us faithful in your service
until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives for ever and ever. Amen.

Merciful God of peace,
your work, spoken by the prophets,
restores your people's life and hope.
Fill our hearts with the joy of your saving grace,

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that we may hold fast to your great goodness
and in our lives proclaim your justice in all the world. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11:

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me" - make sure to read this alongside Luke 4, where Jesus reads these words in the synagogue. Jesus does not read exactly what we read here. I like Jesus' spin better ;)

"bind up the brokenhearted" - I love this phrase. This whole passage is how I would prefer to describe evangelism, instead of describing it as trying to get people to "accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior." I think this passage gets at the heart of *why* we want to share Jesus - he's good news for those who've heard none.

"I the Lord love justice." Do you *love* justice? What does it mean to love justice for those who are oppressed?

Psalm 126:

"we were like those who dream." I like this verse - sounds like it should be from some Shakespeare play, some poetry. The psalmist talks about how surreal/unreal/dreamlike it felt to be restored, to be made whole again by God, to be returned to Zion. What, in your dreams, could God make of your life?

What great things has God done for you? For others?

"May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy." A good benediction!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24:

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances." A tall order, isn't it? *Always? Without ceasing? In all circumstances?* Can you do this? Always remember how blessed you are? Paul encourages us to always maintain our connection with God that reminds us who we are.

"the one who calls you is faithful" - Jesus is faithful, even when we are not. Sometimes I think we expect God to let us down because we let

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God down. We're setting our standard the wrong way. We should take our standard from God, who is always faithful to us.

John 1:6-8, 19-28:

Compare John's poetic introduction of John the Baptist to that found in the Synoptic gospels. John's writing is almost poetry, like he's setting a stage of characters, all of them getting ready for the appearance of Jesus.

John's gospel is the only one where John the Baptist self-identifies as speaking from Isaiah. John portrays a very self-aware John the Baptist, who knows who he is. What do you think? How do you think John the Baptist saw himself?

John describes Jesus as the light, and John the Baptist, not the light, testifying to the light. In Matthew, we read of Jesus saying that *we* are the light of the world. Do you think Matthew and John disagree, or show us different perspectives? Are you the light of the world? Do you testify to the light? Do you, like John the Baptist, know your role in this story?

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

Rockies Net - "Rejoice" - The word is sprinkled throughout today's readings: in the first reading from Isaiah, the prophet proclaims that God has sent him to bring "glad tidings to the poor" and "I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul". The psalm of the day is taken from Mary's Magnificat, in which she exclaims "My soul rejoices in my God, my spirit finds joy in God my savior". The second reading from Paul's letter to the Thessalonians begins with the words "Rejoice always".

These readings have their basis in the Hebrew language, which has more words for joy and rejoicing than any other language and this from a language known for having few words. In the Old Testament, 13 Hebrew roots, found in 27 different words, are used primarily for some aspect of joy or joyful participation in religious worship.

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/b-ad03sg.php>

Prayer, Frederick Buechner Sermon Illustrations.

Believe Somebody is listening. Believe in miracles. That's what Jesus told the father who asked him to heal his epileptic son. Jesus said, "All things are possible to him who believes." And the father spoke for all of us when he answered, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:14-29)

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<http://frederickbuechner.com/content/weekly-sermon-illustration-prayer>

Day 1 - God's Will for You - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The theme of this sermon : The Apostle Paul states three short imperatives, instructions for holy and godly living : rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances. "This," he adds, "is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you....

...The life of holiness and godliness to which you and I are called, which hastens the day, does not demand withdrawal from the world so as not to be tainted by it, nor does it fling us blindly and singularly into life's corruptions and brokenness, there to fix the world on our own. Rather, God promises that holiness and godliness will emerge within us as we rejoice, pray and give thanks always, unceasingly, in all circumstances."

http://day1.org/1123-gods_will_for_you

America - The usual short but comprehensive treatment outlining the substance of each of today's reading's for Gaudete sunday. There is indeed a sermon in the concluding paragraph, "John the Baptist's role as a joyful witness to Jesus makes him a great Advent figure. His witness not only prepares the way for Jesus but also provides an example for us. Indeed, one way to describe our vocation as Christians is by the term "witness." We stand up and say what we know to be the truth about God and about Jesus. We stand beside John the Baptist and the other great characters of the Fourth Gospel, and bear witness to what we know and believe about the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. In this witness we can and should "rejoice always."

http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=4525

CHILDREN

Worshipping with children - The key words for today are Joy and Rejoice. The customary rich resource.

<http://worshippingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2011/07/year-b-third-sunday-of-advent-december.html>

"Who Is The Greatest" - Childrens talk from Sermons4Kids - but accessed through Richard fairchild's site. You need to scroll down a wee bit for it. A baseball and bat would be useful! Otherwise you will have to do a cricket version.

- <http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/b-ad03sg.php>

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[The Light of the World](http://childrenssermonstoday.blogspot.co.uk/2011/12/third-sunday-in-advent.html), Dianne Deming, *Children's Sermons Today*
<http://childrenssermonstoday.blogspot.co.uk/2011/12/third-sunday-in-advent.html>

[Advent and Christmas Eve](http://childrenssermonstoday.blogspot.co.uk/2011/12/third-sunday-in-advent.html), Frances Woodruff, *On the Chancel Steps*.
<http://childrenssermonstoday.blogspot.co.uk/2011/12/third-sunday-in-advent.html>