

# SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## A Highway for Our God

Father,  
from the beginning,  
you have revealed yourself.  
You have called us to walk in your ways.  
We wait for you to bring to fulfillment  
the work you are doing

from the creation of the earth  
to today.  
We wait in hope.  
Help us to do our small part  
to make a path for you,  
a highway for our God.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Sunday, December 5, 2021**

**All Flesh Shall See the Salvation of God**



*Today's readings: Baruch 5:1-9; Psalm 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6; Philemon 1:4-6, 8-11; Luke 3:1-6.* John the Baptist and Mary, the mother of our Lord, are our examples for how to live during Advent. Both waited, watched, and prepared. They did then what we hope to do now.

Today, we hear John proclaim that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." As John preaches, teaches, and baptizes in the wilderness, he focuses on what God is doing: God is saving. John performs his task. He makes straight a path. He clears the way.

John is called by God within the prophetic tradition of the people of Israel. We hear it when he quotes Isaiah and in the echo of those words in the prophet Baruch. Rooted in the

people of Israel and in Scripture, John has practice listening to God's voice. In the wilderness, he hears that God is doing something new. God is bringing all flesh into the plan of salvation, as foretold in the prophets of old.

God was inaugurating the promised kingdom of justice and peace, creating a new heaven and a new earth. John called the people to turn away from the ways that had fallen short of God's vision for them, and people flocked to him because they saw the world's brokenness and knew that God had promised something different. Something new.

We wait in hope for the fullness of this same kingdom. Like John, we are called to prepare its way. How has God invited you to make straight his paths?



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, December 6

#### St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas was a bishop in the fourth century who was known for his generosity, one sign of which was leaving coins in the shoes of people who left them out for him. He is also said to have secretly given money to a family to provide funds so the daughters could marry. Nicholas suffered under persecution and defended the Church teaching about the Trinity at a time when it was disputed. St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children. To honor him today, you might choose to do an act of kindness secretly, just as he did. *Today's readings: Isaiah 35:1–10; Psalm 85:9ab, 10, 11–12, 13–14; Luke 5:17–26.*

### Tuesday, December 7

#### St. Ambrose

St. Ambrose was the bishop of Milan in the fourth century and a doctor of the Church. He wrote music that is used in the Liturgy of the Hours during Advent even today. Regarding care for the poor, St. Ambrose said it was not charity but a debt to those who were in need. Celebrate St. Ambrose's feast day by contributing to an agency that serves the poor in your community. *Today's readings: Isaiah 40:1–11; Psalm 96:1–2, 3, 10ac, 11–12, 13; Matthew 18:12–14.*

### Wednesday, December 8

#### Immaculate Conception

God prepared Mary for her unique role in salvation history from the moment she was conceived. The special grace she received even before she was born helped give her the courage to say, "May it be done to me according to your word." Mary's yes changed the world. Each one of us has the opportunity to participate in what God is doing in the world every single day. How can you respond with the same wholehearted yes as the Mother of God? *Today's readings: Genesis 3:9–15, 20; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; Ephesians 1:3–6, 11–12; Luke 1:26–38.*

### Thursday, December 9

#### St. Juan Diego

Today the Church celebrates St. Juan Diego, the patron saint of indigenous peoples. The Virgin Mary appeared to Juan Diego near Mexico City in the sixteenth century, a time when people of his culture were treated as less than those who had come from Europe. Mary's apparition and its miraculous image on Juan Diego's tilma embodied many elements of indigenous culture. This event was the beginning of something new for the peoples of the Americas. God is imaged in all people and all cultures. By listening to the stories of people who are different from us, we can participate in what God is doing in the world. *Today's readings: Isaiah 41:13–20; Psalm 145:1, 9, 10–11, 12–13ab; Matthew 11:11–15.*

### Friday, December 10

#### Peace

In Isaiah we hear about the possibility of peace flowing like a river. Life is full of conflict and misunderstanding. Relationships that seemed unbreakable can be torn apart by simple difficulties. When we consider the kingdom of God, of participating in God's peace forever, it fills us with hope. While at Mass, focus on what it must mean for Christ's peace to be with you. *Today's readings: Isaiah 48:17–19; Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4, 6; Matthew 11:16–19.*

### Saturday, December 11

#### Our Only Hope

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus predicts his passion. It is an interesting thing to consider the cross during the season of Advent, when we await the Lord's coming. Yet the shadow of the cross is always present in the life of Jesus. In this season of hope, we look at the cross, our only hope, and see in it the resurrection and the possibility it contains: God filling the earth as water covers the sea. *Today's readings: Sirach 48:1–4, 9–11; Psalm 80:2ac and 3b, 15–16, 18–19; Matthew 17:9a, 10–13.*

