



as a witness to speak for the light,
so that everyone might believe through
him.

He was not the light,
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness.
When the Jews sent priests and Levites
from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'
he not only declared, but he declared quite
openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they
asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said.
'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.'
So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must
take back an answer to those who sent us.
What have you to say about yourself?' So
John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the
Pharisees, and they put this further
question to him, 'Why are you baptising if
you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and
not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise
with water; but there stands among you –
unknown to you – the one who is coming
after me; and I am not fit to undo his
sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany,
on the far side of the Jordan, where John
was baptising.

Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

St John's Gospel never calls John, 'the
Baptist'. No, he is John the Witness: 'a
witness to speak for the Light'. We
discover in this Gospel that this light is
embodied in Jesus Christ, most
graphically portrayed in the
Transfiguration when Christ's body is
radiant, translucent, with Divine Light.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world,
the One who came to liberate human
beings from the many dark captivities
which imprison them, the One who
vanquished the inky blackness of the
tomb.

We can become partakers in the life of
this Divine Light. At baptism, this is
symbolised by the lighting of a small
candle from the great Easter candle
which is sung into the church on the
Easter Vigil as 'Christ our Light', the
Conqueror of Death.

As a baptised people our allegiance to
'The Light' is not to be a private matter
between 'me and God'. No, like John,
we must bear witness to 'The Light' by
being instruments of His power to
dispel the darkness which can
enshroud people's lives.

We could pause for a moment to
commit ourselves to fulfil the promise
of our baptismal candle so that we
might more authentically celebrate the
birth of the Divine Light come into
human history.

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The Living Word

Third Sunday of Advent, Year B

17 December 2023

First Reading Is 61:1-2.10-11

I exult for joy in the Lord.

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.

He has sent me to bring good news to the
poor,

to bind up hearts that are broken;
to proclaim liberty to captives,

freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

'I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of
salvation,

he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and
praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.'

Responsorial Psalm

Lk 1:46-50. 53-54. R. Is 61:10

(R.) *My soul rejoices in my God.*

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her
nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me
blessed. (R.)
2. The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. (R.)

3. He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. (R.)

Second Reading 1 Thes 5:16-24

May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and
for all things give thanks to God, because
this is what God expects you to do in Christ
Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the
gift of prophecy with contempt; think before
you do anything – hold on to what is good
and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect
and holy; and may you all be kept safe and
blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has
called you and he will not fail you.

Gospel Acclamation Is 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!

Gospel Jn1:6-8.19-28

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.

A man came, sent by God.

His name was John.

He came as a witness,



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Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil: 5.00pm Sunday: 9.00am

Weekdays: Tuesday to Friday 9.00am

Reconciliation: Saturday 4.00pm to 4.30pm or by appointment



3rd Sunday of Advent

17 December 2023



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve Sunday 24 December Carols 6.30pm

Mass 7.00pm

Christmas Day Monday 25 December Mass 9.00am

Please note that our usual weekend Masses will be celebrated on
Saturday 23 December 5.00pm and
Sunday morning 24 December 9.00am.

Reconciliation 7pm to 8pm on Tues. 19 Dec. as well as the usual 4pm Sat.
Advent and Lent are ideal times to receive the Sacrament of Penance.

Symbolism of the Advent Wreath

The candles and the light remind us of the light Jesus brought into our world. The waiting for all the candles to be lit symbolizes the long years of waiting for the Savior. The greenery suggests life, growth and hope.

The Jesse Tree

Jesse was a shepherd who lived near Bethlehem 1000 years before Jesus was born. Samuel a prophet of God chose one of Jesse's sons, David and anointed him King of the Jewish nation. With our Jesse tree we are remembering David and other members of Jesus' family, as well as others, who waited for the coming of Jesus the Messiah. Our Jesse Tree reminds us that each one of us is important and that we each add something special to the coming of Jesus.

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.

Jesus is the Reason for the Season

Let's Keep Christ in Christmas

Musicians/singers are needed at our weekend masses and for Christmas. If you are blessed with such a gift, come and share it to give praise to God.

PARISH MEETING 3/12: The report is on the noticeboard.

Catholic Weekly is available at church entrances.

Find out what is happening in the Catholic Church around the world.

CHRISTMAS AT THE CATHEDRAL

Every evening, festivities will commence at 5.30pm with dinner options, stage performances, face painting, and gift stalls, before the illumination of the Cathedral at 8.30pm.

The Cathedral will also be open each night to the public until the extended time of 10pm, with traditional Christmas displays, including a holy nativity scene, towering real Christmas tree and displays. For more information visit christmasatthecathedral.org.au

CAROLS FOR PEACE

At the Cathedral, this Friday 22 December at 7.00pm.

Entry by donation, all funds benefit Aid for Church in Need.

Bookings essential at www.carolsforpeace.org

READERS NEXT WEEKEND: S Bell, Z Golebiowski; E Eberl, S Zeglin.

CHRISTMAS MASSES: J Russell, S Zeglin, S Bell; M Crowe, C Jordan.

Covid-19 is still around.

Please use sanitiser when you enter our church.

Please remember in your prayers:

Recently deceased: Jeong Wook Park, Shirley Love, Monica McAuliffe, David McKenzie, Charlie Farrugia, Nola Dooley (née Vaughan), Gaye Zammit. Janice Peterson

Anniversary: All the Faithful Departed, John Burke, Jim Taylor

A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney: Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, has been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding & Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support & guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.