



Wednesday Prayer

2nd Sunday in Advent – A Proclamation of Good News

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Mark 1:1-8

Action, urgency, and preparation are all described here by Mark in this proclamation of the Good News. This is not a passive waiting for Jesus to arrive. We are to prepare the way! And we are to prepare ourselves for new beginnings, for changed lives through baptism.

John’s passion and immediacy brought people *from the whole countryside* and from *all of Jerusalem*. Imagine this excitement to be baptized by this rough-looking, reclusive prophet, who states he is unworthy to even untie the sandals of Jesus. Imagine if we could be this excited for new beginnings, and for how we can impact lives through our service.



This picture was taken at my son’s graduation from St. John’s University this spring – newly graduated seniors exuberant at this new beginning – running into the water fully clothed and robed in their gowns. They were immersing themselves in the pure joy of this moment. I’m excited to see how young people *from the whole countryside and from all of the cities* immerse themselves in new beginnings, and how we help to prepare them for healthy lives of good service and good relationships.

God of newness and life, we strive for the passion and excitement John imparted on the people who came for a new beginning. Help us to find the joy in this season, in preparing the way for your coming, and in our love and support of all the young people in our communities. May we find joy in connection with one another and in your promise. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.