

## Theme of the Week – Peace

Sunday is the second Sunday of Advent and this week we light a second purple candle, a candle to represent **Peace**. In Sunday's gospel we hear of God sending John the Baptist to prepare the people for the coming of his Son, Jesus. Jesus is known as the **Prince of Peace** and the **peace** Jesus brings flows from faith, love, mind, spirit, sentiments and convictions of the human heart. John, filled with the Holy Spirit, had the courage to stand before the crowds and preach to them. A time where there were many rulers, Kings or High Priests 'Pilate, Herod, Philip, Lyssanias, Annas and Caiaphas' who held their positions and did not want to be challenged. John told the people of Israel to turn back to God and asked for forgiveness for their sins so they were ready to listen to the words of Jesus when he came. Today we are asked to do the same thing. The Church sees John the Baptist as the last prophet of Israel who looked and yearned for the coming of the Messiah. John prepares the people for the coming of the Lord and announces him. John lived in the desert, rejecting the prevailing culture of the day and instead proclaimed the possibility of freedom and holiness. The baptism John offered was a plunging into water to signify a person's repentance of sin. When asked what people had to do in response to his preaching, he advocated not praying and fasting but changing the way they treated others. His call was compelling — he called others into the metaphorical desert to leave the things that amused and distracted them, and come to meet the One who can satisfy them.

We too are being called by John to examine our ways, change our lives, and live as people who have been saved. As seekers of God we are to live justly and at **peace** with others according to our own calling. We should be people of joy, and that joy should be obvious to all. We must be people of prayer and thanksgiving, asking God for everyone's needs not just our own. Who are the people you have met who have inspired or challenged you to be a better person? The spirituality of the desert still has a place in the Church today. Leaving the things that amuse and distract us to spend time with God is the basis of our starting relationship with God. In what ways can you make a 'desert place' in your day to day life so

you can be more **Faith-Filled** in your relationship with God? What might John suggest to you if you were to ask him "What then should I do?" so you can then be more **Hopeful** to others in society today so we all can find peace?

# Peace

Weekly Reflections  
8<sup>th</sup> December 2024  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent



## From the Gospel of Luke (3: 1-6)

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness:  
Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
Every valley will be filled in,  
every mountain and hill be laid low,  
winding ways will be straightened  
and rough roads made smooth.  
And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

## Prayer for the Week

**Peaceful Father, give us the strength to purify ourselves in anticipation of the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ. May we find the strength within ourselves to seek you in prayer, to reconcile ourselves and others with peace and to bring hope to those around us.**

**Through Christ our Lord**

**Amen**

### Day 1

Today is the Feast Day of 'The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary'. This is a Solemnity within the Church dedicated to Mary. Please watch the short video on this special feast within the Church.

### Day 2

Do you recall the meaning of a metaphor? (It was a question from the theme of the week of Miracle.) How is John using a metaphor when asking others to live in the desert? If you were to examine your ways, what could you do differently to live justly and be at peace with God?

### Day 3

How can you change your day to day life so you can be more **Faith-Filled** and have a deeper relationship with God?  
How can you then be more **Hopeful** to others so they can find peace and joy in their lives?

### **Catholic Social Teaching - Option for the Poor**

A preferential option for the poor means that we think first about the needs of those who are the most vulnerable. Jesus taught that when we feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, look after the sick and visit those imprisoned, we are looking after Him. We work wherever the need is greatest. We refuse to accept the suffering of our brothers and sisters. No one should be beyond reach of the love and support they need "The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty!"

The [Option for the Poor] affects the life of each Christian as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ." St Pope John Paul II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 42

**How this half term can you promote the Common Good in all that you do in St Joseph's and society?**

