



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Cycle C

Baruch 5:1-9  
Ps 126:1-6  
Phil 1:4-6, 8-11  
Luke 3:1-6

### Monday December 10

Isaiah 35:1-10  
Ps 85:9-14  
Luke 5:17-26

### Tuesday December 11

Isaiah 40:1-11  
Ps 96:1-3, 10-13  
Matthew 18:12-14

### Wednesday December 12

#### Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zechariah 2:14-17 or  
Rev 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab  
Deut 13:18-19  
Luke 1:26-38

### Thursday December 13

#### St. Lucy

Isaiah 41:13-20  
Ps 145:1, 9, 10-13ab  
Matthew 11:11-15

### Friday December 14

#### St. John of the Cross

Isaiah 48:17-19  
Ps 1:1-4, 6  
Matthew 11:16-19

### Saturday December 15

Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11  
Ps 80:2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19  
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

While we're shopping for gifts, decorating, and sending Christmas cards, what are we doing to make Christmas a new rebirth of Christ for our daily lives?

All the readings at Mass during Advent remind us that this season is a time intended for spiritual preparation. It's tempting to let the busyness of December distract us from the most important purpose of Advent: our personal spiritual growth.

In our responsorial Psalm today, we proclaim: "The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!" Do you actually feel joyful when you mouth these words?

It takes faith to experience joy in the midst of hardships. Faith grows from knowing that the Lord does great things for us because of his mercy -- not because we have earned it, as we'll never be good enough. Repenting from our sins opens us to become aware of this mercy.

Therefore, Saint John the Baptizer is proclaiming to us today: "Prepare the way of the Lord!"

Now is the time to ask: What preparations do I need to make? What am I doing to straighten out the messes in my life, the areas of sin that continually distract me from a close relationship with Christ?

What penances will help "make straight" my path?

What depressing or discouraging valley of hardship needs to get filled with the joy of the Lord? If it seems hopeless, what will I do to let Jesus take charge of it? What mountain of debt or difficult obstacle needs to be made low by having faith in the Lord's digging tools?

What's twisted and warped in my thinking, like a road that winds through a jungle of confusion? I pray, Holy Spirit, that you will lead me straight to holiness! What's rough about me? What's edgy and sharp and rubs others the wrong way? Lord Jesus, smooth me like a diamond polisher.

Throughout, let us examine the ways in which we still need to see the salvation of God. Let us make a plan of action to be holier and happier at the end of the Jubilee Year than we are today!

### Reflect & Discuss:

1. Which of the above questions stand out most for you?
2. What will you do with this to prepare the way of the Lord so that your faith grows?
3. Name a tradition you grew up with that prepared you for Christmas. How did this affect your spiritual growth?
4. What's your favorite way of preparing for the holy celebration of Christmas? Why?