

A photograph of a person walking barefoot on a sandy beach. The person is wearing a long, flowing red robe over a white undergarment. The background is a soft-focus view of the ocean and sky. The overall tone is warm and serene.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE GOOD NEWS
PROCLAIMED
TO THEM.

MATTHEW 11:5

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return
and enter Zion singing,
crowned with everlasting joy;
they will meet with joy and gladness,
sorrow and mourning will flee. (Isa 35:10)

Psalm:

Lord, come and save us. (Ps 146)
OR
Alleluia.

Second Reading:

Be patient, brothers and sisters,
until the coming of the Lord. (Jas 5:7)

Gospel:

Jesus said to them in reply,
"Go and tell John what you hear and see:
the blind regain their sight,
the lame walk,
lepers are cleansed,
the deaf hear,
the dead are raised,
and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them."
(Mt 11:4-5)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

"Go and tell what you have seen and heard,"
Jesus says. When it comes to proving who he
is, he always lets his actions do the talking. We
have heard. We have seen. We must go and
tell. Let's let our actions do the talking. Who
do we think Jesus is?

Observances for the week of December 14, 2025

Sunday: 3rd Sunday of Advent

Next Sunday: 4th Sunday of Advent



Devotions, *Explained!*

Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego in Mexico City in 1531. The Patroness of the Americas, Our Lady of Guadalupe is a beloved symbol of faith, motherhood and identity. Her feast day is Dec. 12.

Prayer for Advent - New Growth

Dear God,
Bring new life! Your love creates
and cultivates.
Bring Your power into the places I
think of as "deserts"
and your grace to the prayers I
fear may be "deserted."
You can redeem and restore,
bring a new song to my heart.
Amen.

Readings for the week of December 14, 2025

Sunday:

Is 35:1-6a, 10/Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10
(see Is 35:4)/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11

Monday:

Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9/Mt 21:23-27

Tuesday:

Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23/Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday:

Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17/
Mt 1:1-17

Thursday:

Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19/
Mt 1:18-25

Friday:

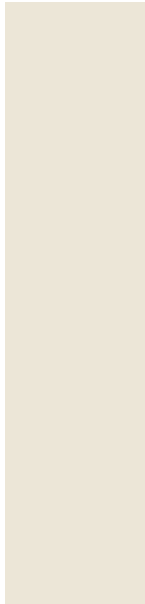
Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25

Saturday:

Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/
Lk 1:26-38

Next Sunday:

Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 (7c, 10b)/
Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

When I was 11, I was riding my bike on a Friday night in Scottsdale, Arizona. I saw giant spotlights swirling in the sky. Something amazing had to be happening. I pedaled after them with excitement. Sweaty and tired, I arrived, only to find a used car lot. Bright lights, flapping banners, inflatable balloon men swaying wildly in the wind. I stood there, heart sinking. All that spectacle, and all my effort ... for this?

As life proceeds, we learn what it is like to pursue promising but fruitless searches. This week we hear Jesus ask the crowds regarding John the Baptist: **“What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?” (Matthew 11:7).** He’s not just describing the crowd’s mis-aimed pursuit. He’s naming our tendency to chase after what’s flashy but flimsy.

What are our swaying reeds? For me, it is endless video reels on my phone, worldly pleasures, entertainment in sports, and the good opinion of others. Inflated distractions that bend whichever way the wind blows. But they can’t satisfy my soul. What are your flimsy reeds?

John the Baptist wasn’t a swaying reed. He was rooted, grounded, unafraid to speak the solid truth. The people went to see him because, deep down, they were starving for something real.

This Advent, the Church asks us to reassess: What are we really looking for? Are we chasing the dazzling but hollow? Or are we seeking what is solid and lasting — that which points to Christ?

— *Father John Muir*



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(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: We go to Mass. We go to Confession. We pray. We read Scripture. In doing all these things, again and again, we go out to the desert. Why? What are we expecting to see?

What We See in the Desert

I've always wanted to see a real desert.

I know all about frigid, snowy winters and warm, wet summers. I grew up on rich soil that yields lush vegetation and bountiful harvests. But I've never experienced a desert, not in my own country or abroad, and I'm curious.

I know there must be something magical about the desert for it to feature so heavily in Scripture, for it to provide a backdrop to so many crucial moments of salvation history. The Israelites following the cloud, the temptation of Christ, the voice crying out: "Prepare the way for the Lord."

Why do these moments have to happen in a desert? Why do they make so much less sense in a tropical rainforest or a verdant forest?

I think it's because the desert doesn't have anything to offer us, at first glance. No one longs for the physical sensation of a dry heat and a beating sun. But the vast emptiness and the almost mystical harshness — even if we don't desire and delight in it, this is a setting that we understand, somehow, intrinsically. We know it deep within our soul. God is there.

We go to Mass. We go to Confession. We pray. We read Scripture. In doing all these things, again and again, we go out to the desert.

Why? What are we expecting to see?

If we expect to be entertained, we will be disappointed. If we expect reassurance, we will be disappointed. If we expect to feel pleasant and safe and sheltered, we will be disappointed.

The desert is there to challenge us. The desert is there to show us who we are, and who we can be.

So go.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that?

Catholic Life Explained

Question:

Our prayer group has been reading the lives of some saints, and we were struck by how some of them thought they were such sinners. Why would someone so holy think they had such serious sin?

Answer:

As Professional athletes practice the fundamentals of their sport over and over again, reaching for better form, consistency, and performance. They focus on the basics, review past performances, and visualize greater success. Practice makes better, if not perfect!

Spiritual masters such as the saints also looked for perfection. They practiced their faith in the search for holiness, grace, and virtue. Through sacraments, prayer, study, good works, and penance, they raised their level of awareness and their sensitivity to the presence of God, the demands of the Gospel, and the workings of the Holy Spirit. They examined their consciences daily, reviewing the day for moments of failure and times that they could have been more virtuous in one way or another. They resolved to do better, be more attentive, and alert!

Therefore, anything that would distract them or interfere with their relationship with God would be like a small black spot on a bright white wall — you can't miss it! The great saints were aware of sin and the presence of evil because they were so tuned into the struggle between good and evil that was fought in their own lives, hearts, and souls.

“This is the one about whom it is written:

Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.

Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

- Mt 11:10-11

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

The prophet Isaiah taught his community to “be strong, fear not!” because God has planned a remarkable future where both the people and the land will be restored. Is there a friend or co-worker who needs your encouragement this week?

Second Reading:

James encourages his community to be patient and firm of heart in waiting for the coming of the Lord. What are you waiting for during this Advent season?

Gospel:

In prison, John the Baptist seemed uncertain about who Jesus is. Who do you talk to when you have questions about Jesus?



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O LORD, COME AND SAVE US.

PSALM 146

Jesus said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.” - Mt 11:4-5

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Prayer

Dear God, show me ways to help my friends follow God, too.

Mission for the Week

If you have any videos that tell Bible stories, watch one or two together with your family.

Sharing the Gospel

Name someone that you think is very important. Jesus said that John the Baptist was the greatest man ever born. John the Baptist did not live in a big house or wear nice clothes. He was not the president, and he did not own a huge company. You would probably think he was very poor. But John the Baptist was truly great because he loved and trusted God with his whole heart. He helped other people follow God, too.

Now color the picture!



Fit this Gospel Message into the empty squares:

Tell John what you have heard and seen.

