

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.  
Indeed, the Lord is near.*

## COLLECT

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## FIRST READING Isaiah 35:1-6a. 10

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;  
it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
Say to those who have an anxious heart,  
'Be strong; fear not!  
Behold, your God will come with vengeance,  
with the recompense of God.  
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then shall the lame man leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return  
and come to Sion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain gladness and joy,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 146(145):6c-7. 8-9a. 9b-10  
R. cf. Isaiah 35:4

**R: Come, Lord, and save us.**

Or **Alleluia.**

1. It is the LORD who preserves fidelity for ever,  
who does justice to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the LORD who sets prisoners free. **R.**
2. It is the LORD who opens the eyes of the blind,  
the LORD who raises up those who are bowed down.  
It is the LORD who loves the just,  
the LORD who protects the stranger. **R.**
3. The LORD upholds the orphan and the widow,  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The LORD will reign for ever,  
your God, O Sion, from age to age. **R.**

## SECOND READING James 5:7-10

A reading from the Letter of Saint James.

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)

**R: Alleluia, Alleluia.**

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.

**R: Alleluia.**

## GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'

And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

'What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you."

'Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray,  
be offered to you unceasingly,  
to complete what was begun in sacred mystery  
and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.  
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We implore your mercy, Lord,  
that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults  
and prepare us for the coming feasts.  
Through Christ our Lord.

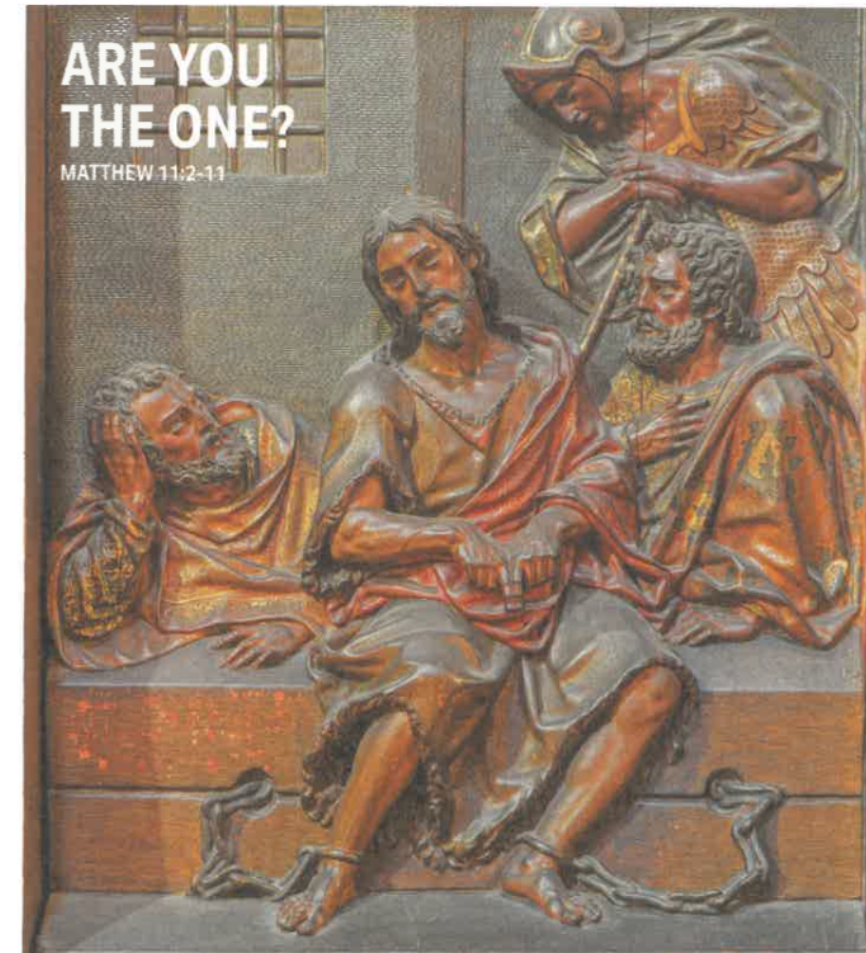
**Amen.**

# Sunday Message

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## THE WORD

Year A • 14 December 2025 • Psalter Week 3



This Gospel reading offers a rich moment of transition between the Old Testament expectation and the New Testament fulfilment. John the Baptist, representing the prophetic tradition of Israel, sends his disciples to Jesus with a pivotal question: "Are you the one who is to come?" His inquiry is not necessarily one of disbelief, but of seeking confirmation – asking whether Jesus truly fulfils the hopes spoken by the prophets.

Rather than offering a direct claim, Jesus points to His works. His answer echoes Isaiah's prophecies: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor receive good news. These are not random miracles, but signs that the long-awaited time of salvation has begun. Jesus allows the Scriptures to speak for Him.

The passage also offers a reflection on John's role. Though imprisoned and perhaps confused, John is praised by Jesus as the greatest among those born of women.

This Gospel encourages us to recognise how Jesus fulfils God's promises, not in dramatic displays, but in merciful action, quiet healing, and good news shared with the lowly.

This passage teaches us that God's work often unfolds differently from what is expected – and that recognising the signs requires humility, faith, and patience. ■

## DO

Take time each day to notice small signs of goodness – moments of kindness, healing, or encouragement – in your home, parish, or community. At the end of each day, thank God for one way His quiet work was visible.

## REFLECT

**J**ohn the Baptist is in prison. He had spent his life preparing the way for the Messiah, but now, facing death, he begins to wonder: Is Jesus truly the One? So he sends messengers to ask, and Jesus answers not with a simple yes or no, but with evidence: "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Good News proclaimed to them."

Jesus is quietly fulfilling the words of Isaiah – not with spectacle or force, but with mercy, healing, and hope. This is God's way: humble, patient, and often surprising. John had imagined something more dramatic, but Jesus reveals a kingdom built on compassion, not domination.

This Gospel is perfect for Gaudete Sunday – the Sunday of joy. Not a shallow or noisy joy, but the deep joy that comes from knowing that God is truly at work, even when we don't fully understand His ways.

When we face doubt, disappointment, or delay, Jesus invites us to look again. Where is mercy happening? Where is grace quietly at work?

Today, we rejoice not because everything is perfect, but because Christ is near. And wherever He is, healing and hope are never far behind. ■

## SAY

**When I'm unsure,  
Lord, give me peace.  
When I can't see clearly,  
let me still follow you.  
Let your quiet grace be enough  
for today.  
Amen.**

## LEARN

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 548) teaches:

*"The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent him. They invite belief in him. But for those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask. So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works."*





# The Parish of Our Lady Immaculate & St Robert Harrogate

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THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDATE SUNDAY) – Year A			
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec	4 – 4.40pm	Confessions	Vincent Naylor (Anniversary)
	5.00pm	Vigil Mass	
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2025	9am	Mass	Special Intention (JK)  Pro Populo
	11am	Mass	
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	12 Noon	Mass	Peter James Tinline (Anniversary)
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	9am	Mass	Joseph McCann (Anniversary)
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	12 Noon	Mass	Richard Roberts (Anniversary)
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	11.30am	Exposition	William Lang (Anniversary)
	12 Noon	Mass	

<b>Recent deaths:</b>
<b>Mass intentions received for Lately Dead:</b> Paul Fitzpatrick

***Please remember in prayer all those who have died this week, may they rest in peace.  
Please pray for all the sick of the Parish and those for whom Mass is offered this week  
and those whose anniversaries occurs at this time***

**A warm welcome to Mass this weekend and  
a special welcome to our visitors  
Do join us for refreshments after Mass**

**With very grateful thanks** for your generous donations to the Parish.

Presepe - Italian Nativity Scene **A wonderful scene for Advent** In the baptistry at the back of church, to the left as you come in, you will find this year's 'Presepe' - an Italian Advent scene lovingly prepared over many weeks by Val. Take the time before or after Mass or when the church is open during the day to come and wonder at the intricacy of this incredible scene at the centre of which is the stable at Bethlehem just waiting the arrival of the Christ child. Well done, many congratulations and the thanks of our parish to Val for this very beautiful and moving creation which we blessed at Mass on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady.

## REGULAR EVENTS

APF Red Mission – Michael Brennan  
Presbytery 01423 504988

Children's Liturgy - Suzanne Walker  
swalker@sysstra.com

9am Choir – John Ibison  
11am Choir – Lisa Madden  
Presbytery 01423 504988

Churches Flower team – Sue Greveson  
Presbytery 01423 504988

Gift Aid – Richard Boscoe  
[office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Mary's Angels Parent & Toddler Group -  
1st & 3rd Mondays -  
Katherine 01423 734828

Mothers' Prayers - meetings held  
fortnightly. Jackie Tevlin 01423 529035

Parish Centre bookings  
[Office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:Office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Phoenix (Bereavement Support) -  
Presbytery 01423 504988

Piety Stall - Caroline Walker  
[office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

Safeguarding Representative (Parish)  
Mick Hopwood  
[psr.mhopwood@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:psr.mhopwood@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

SoulCore - Monday 9.30 - Marie Baker  
[mbaker0813@gmail.com](mailto:mbaker0813@gmail.com)

St Robert's Brownies - Wed 5.30-7.15  
Sarah Mansfield 01423 566651  
[mansfield.sarah@gmail.com](mailto:mansfield.sarah@gmail.com)

St Vincent de Paul Society - Mon 7pm  
Katherine Merton Jones 01423 522731  
Furniture – 0113 245 0800

St Robert's Walking Group - Second  
Thurs of the month, contact George  
Marczak 07905820864 or  
[george@vbs-computers.com](mailto:george@vbs-computers.com)

St John Fisher - Mr S Mort  
01423 887254

St Robert's Primary - Miss J Collins  
01423 504730

St Roberts Club: open Mon-Fri from 7pm  
(or by arrangement) –  
[info@strobertsclub.co.uk](mailto:info@strobertsclub.co.uk)

200 Club - Caroline Walker  
[office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

This is not a full list and just gives a little  
advance notice of events coming up.

**DEC**  
21<sup>st</sup> – 6pm Carol Service

**JAN**  
7<sup>th</sup> - 10.30am – Sycamore  
11<sup>th</sup> – 5pm Sycamore  
18<sup>th</sup> – 5pm Apologia

**SUPPORTING YOUR PARISH FINANCIALLY** The most popular way of ensuring that the Parish benefits from whatever regular giving you can afford, and where possible, ensuring Gift Aid is claimed (at no extra cost to you) is by Standing Order. Forms can be accessed by clicking the link below, picking up a form at the back of church or simply set up via your own banking facilities.:  
[Standing Order form](#)  
[DOL Gift Aid Declaration form](#)

Account name:  
Diocese Leeds Our Lady  
Immaculate St Robert H'gate

Sort Code: 40-27-15

Account No: 81017489

Or you can make a donation by  
scanning this QR CODE



## Advent and Christmas

While we are currently immersed in the Advent season, a season full of promise and expectation, we wanted to let you know in advance the plans for the Christmas celebrations, particularly as many people are planning time with their family and wish to factor in the dates of worship.

The **Diocesan Youth Children's Choir** will present their annual service of Carols on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December**, at 4.30pm. All are warmly invited to join.

On **Sunday 21st December at 6pm we will be holding our annual parish Carol Service**. There'll be lots of firm favourites to sing in preparation to celebrate the great feast to come and, afterwards, we will repair to the parish centre for mulled wine and mince pies. This event has become a firm favourite each year.

The first Mass on **Christmas Eve will be at 4pm** and will be geared towards children and families. As in past years, children are invited to attend dressed as a character from the nativity and the children will be gathered together at some point during the Mass to sing a couple of carols.

The next Mass on **Christmas Eve will be a Vigil Mass at 7pm** and that will be followed later in the evening with **Midnight Mass beginning with carols at 11.30pm**.

**On Christmas Day, there will be Masses at 9am and 11am.**

The **2026 Diocese of Leeds Yearbook**, priced at £5, is available from the piety stall at the back of church. There is also a wide selection of Christmas cards, candles and gifts.

**St Robert's Parish Centre Vacancy** – As John retires, we are seeking to appoint a cleaner/caretaker for 6.5 hours per week. The salary is £12.60 per hour. For a copy of the job description and an application form, please email [office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk](mailto:office.strobert@dioceseofleeds.org.uk) The closing date for applications is 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026. We extend our sincere thanks to John for his dedication and commitment to the parish.

**Sacrament of Confirmation** for children in School Year 6 and above and, who have made their First Holy Communion. The Sacrament will be conferred upon our young people by Bishop Marcus at 7pm on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026. To help candidates to prepare to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, two preparation sessions will be held on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February from 1–5pm and Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March from 1–5pm. Please complete the form in the Narthex and return to Fr Simon no later than 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

**If you would like to be commissioned as a lector** and join the readers' rota either during the week or at weekend Masses, please let Fr Simon know. Some training will be arranged in the new year.

"Lord, teach us how to pray" Luke 11:1 **A new Sycamore Course - January 2026** A new series of Sycamore, the video presentations designed to teach and guide discussion about faith, has been published and we will begin the series in the new year in the parish centre. The course is designed to help those who are beginning to learn about prayer as well as those seasoned in prayer. The titles include Prayers of Adoration, Praise and Worship, Prayers of Thanksgiving and Gratitude, How to Pray the Mass and Praying to the Saints. It is our intention to run each session twice in one week - once mid week and once more on an evening or weekend to give the best opportunity to everyone to attend. The first dates are Wednesday 7th January at 10.30am and the same session will be presented on Sunday 11th January at 5pm. All welcome.

**Apologia - Third Session 'Faith and Reason' Sunday 18th January, 5pm Learning how to understand and deepen our faith** The initiative "Apologia" got off to a good start in September with a walk through the elements of the Mass. This was followed by the second session on 'The Last Things' examining the Church's teaching on heaven and hell, death and judgement. The next session is planned to take place on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January at 5pm in the parish centre. Entitled 'Faith and Reason', the session will be led by parishioner and school governor Sue Collins who will help us examine the relationship between faith and science, with particular reference to Pope St John Paul II's teaching in his 1998 encyclical 'Fides et Ratio'. Do make a note in your diary and join us for this popular and informative event in the new year.

There is a box in the Narthex for donations of tinned/packet food and toiletries for the **Harrogate Foodbank**. Thank you for your generous donations received so far.

Bishop Marcus has asked us to pray for Vocations to Holy Orders and Religious Life:

*Our Lady of Unfailing Help!  
Pray that the Lord of the Harvest  
will send labourers into His harvest  
and that He will grant an abundance of vocations  
to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life  
within the Diocese of Leeds,  
and throughout the world. Amen*