



## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah*

I exult for joy in the Lord.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring in the midst of the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they

are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord.

**Canticle 3 [page 59] or Canticle 15 [page 91] or Psalm 126 [page 782]**

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

*A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians*

May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body,  
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit, do not despise prophesying, but test everything; hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

The Word of the Lord.

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.*

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he has sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

*Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.*

## **The ☩ Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John**

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is  
coming after me.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed, he did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” And he answered, “No.” They said to him then, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.” Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” This took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The gospel of the Lord.