

**December 17<sup>th</sup> 2023 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – Year B – John 1:6 – 8, 19-28**

<sup>1:6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>1:19</sup>This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ <sup>20</sup>He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, ‘I am not the Messiah.’ <sup>21</sup>And they asked him, ‘What then? Are you Elijah?’ He said, ‘I am not.’ ‘Are you the prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’ <sup>22</sup>Then they said to him, ‘Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?’ <sup>23</sup>He said, ‘I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, “Make straight the way of the Lord”’, as the prophet Isaiah said.

<sup>24</sup>Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup>They asked him, ‘Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?’ <sup>26</sup>John answered them, ‘I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup>the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.’ <sup>28</sup>This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.’

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Read and re-read</b> – out loud and slowly the Gospel.</li> <li>➤ <b>Meditate</b> - on reading as being spoken to you, an experience in your life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Pray</b> - Thanksgiving – Repentance – Petition</li> <li>➤ <b>Action</b> – Attitude (Call to change / to act /to do</li> </ul>
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This week's Gospel again see's John the Baptist on his mission to "speak for the light". He was growing very impatient not allowing himself to be categorised and affirming his mission humbly but courageously. We see John the Baptist's conviction that "the One who is to come after" is actually standing there even though the community does not recognise him. There is a lot of darkness around us at the moment and it can get us down. Who are the people that have helped us out of our darkness?

**Prayer:**

**We thank you Lord** that if we trust you someone always comes on the scene sent by you as a witness to speak for the light.

**Forgive us Lord** when we become discouraged and down in these difficult times. We often forget that "the One who is to come" is actually standing with us even though we do not see Him.

**Help us Lord** to be your voice crying out to those in the wilderness telling them that you want to be present with them with your love and compassion if only they open themselves to you.

