

Second Week of Advent
Sunday 6 December 2020

Reflection 8 – Day 8
Making a way in the wilderness

As we enter into this second week in Advent, there is a great focus on making a way and preparation. John the Baptist was preparing the way for Christ's coming, "*He came as a witness to testify to the light [...] He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light*" (John 1.7,8). Likewise, our readings this Sunday are preparing us for the birth of our Lord at Christmas, guiding us through these dark, cold evenings to the coming light.

Our reading in Isaiah 40.1-11 is a hugely evocative one, that is the prophetic mandate of John the Baptist. Re-reading it, it is fascinating that in John 1, John the Baptist quotes Isaiah saying, "*I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness 'Make straight the way of the Lord'*" (v.23), however, in Isaiah, the passage reads: "*A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God'*" (Isaiah 40.3).

This is fascinating as Isaiah is saying that we must prepare the way of the Lord *in the wilderness*. Our current situation can feel quite wilderness-like at times! Where feelings of bewilderment, fear and discombobulation abide. But this is exactly where the way of the Lord was prepared by John.

Likewise, as we symbolically relive and prepare for the coming of Jesus this Advent, perhaps God is calling to us to prepare for Him? Maybe His second coming is near? Maybe the Holy Spirit wants us to prepare for a fresh outpouring of His presence? Maybe God wants to come afresh into your heart today? This week? This Advent?

What we certainly can hold on to is that God has a history of using bad situations for good and bringing light out of darkness!

Light-bringing God,

Thank you that you do indeed bring light out of darkness; that you are the light of the world!

Help me to open my heart to Your presence and live a life guided by Your Spirit.

Amen.