

**Parish of St. Joseph, Morningside**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Cycle B**

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**Pulpit Plan**

<b>Theme</b>	:	<b>He may be slow...but the Messiah is coming!</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	:	Isaiah 61: 1-2.10-11
Responsorial Psalm	:	Luke 1
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	:	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Gospel	:	John 1:6-8.19-28

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- In the first reading LAST Sunday, we heard **comforting words** from the Prophet Isaiah...
  - He promised the exiled Jews would **return** from Babylon to **rebuild** their homes and temple
- We know that this became a reality when King Cyrus freed them and allowed them to return...
- **But** far from being welcomed with joy, their return is viewed with hostility!
  - And the rebuilding is hard work...
  - It gets more and more difficult each day...
  - They are poor and hungry and some even have to become slaves!
    - **Has God deceived them?**
- **No**, says the prophet in our first reading today!
  - *The Lord has anointed him to bring good tidings...to bind up the broken-hearted...to proclaim liberty to captives...and proclaim the year of the Lord's favour!*
- But are the promises of the Prophet fulfilled?
  - Well, there is a slight improvement in their situation, **BUT**...
  - Injustice and corruption continues and the poor still find it very difficult!
- **So, yes the promises will be fulfilled but not immediately...we must wait for the coming Messiah!**
- The prophet tells the people that justice is a process, it comes about with the gentleness of growth in a garden!
  - Perhaps they were frustrated by this...I bet they wanted things to improve far more quickly for them; they surely did not want to wait!
- But only when Jesus came, were the promises fulfilled!
  - At the start of his public life, Jesus reads the words of our first reading in the synagogue in Nazareth and says: *"This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen."* (Lk 4:21)
- I am sure that we want the rubble, destruction, hurt, pain, violence and messiness of our world/our lives which we spoke about last Sunday to be replaced by growth, peace, prosperity, justice and joy as quickly as possible too!
- As people of faith, we are sometimes aware of the fragility of our commitment to God and the weakness of our discipleship...we strive and struggle to be better...and we wish we were - NOW!
- But...

- just as the returning exiles had to wait...
- just as John the Baptist had to wait for the appearing of Jesus...
  - we have to wait!
  - Advent teaches us to wait!
- Waiting, being uncertain about the ways of God, may make it a bit difficult for us to be joyful!
- But where does joy come from?
  - From being absolutely clear and sure about God?
  - From immediately getting everything we ask from God?
    - I don't think so!
- Joy comes from prayer and the service of others; from growing in holiness!
- These things point to a deep communion; a sense of belonging; a caring...
  - This is what we celebrate at Christmas!
  - This is at the core of the mystery of God
- ***A child is born to us, a son is given to us...***we wait patiently and in joyful hope for his coming back to us!