



The Word

Third Sunday of Advent *Week of December 15*

Call to Prayer and Sharing

- ✦ *Leader invites all into a few moments of silent reflection to remember that we are in the presence of God. (reflective pause)*
- ✦ *Then: "In the name of the Father and of the Son"*

The Word of God

- ✦ *Leader reads part or all of one of the scripture texts from the previous Sunday.*

Matthew 11:2-11

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ,
he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question,
"Are you the one who is to come,
or should we look for another?"
Jesus said to them in reply,
"Go and tell John what you hear and see:
the blind regain their sight,
the lame walk,
lepers are cleansed,
the deaf hear,
the dead are raised,
and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.
And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me."

As they were going off,
Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John,
"What did you go out to the desert to see?
A reed swayed by the wind?
Then what did you go out to see?
Someone dressed in fine clothing?
Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces.
Then why did you go out? To see a prophet?
Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.
This is the one about whom it is written:
Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;
he will prepare your way before you.
Amen, I say to you,
among those born of women
there has been none greater than John the Baptist;
yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Faith Sharing

- ✦ *Leader reminds everyone of the Question of the Week which relates to the particular group gathered*

Children: What good thing have you done so far during Advent to be like Jesus?

Teens: What do you see in the world today that is a sign of Christ's presence?

Adults: What good thing have you done so far during Advent to be like Jesus?

We offer this form of contemplative sharing for pondering Scripture while considering the question, and for the faith sharing which follows.

- Listen/ Read (Lectio): Ponder God's word and listen for what touches your heart.
- Meditate (Meditatio): Notice what you notice. Allow God's word to resonate in you.
- Speak/Share (Oratio): Prayerfully share with the group your thoughts and feelings.
- Rest in God's presence (Contemplatio): Notice God's presence and be still, surrounded by God's love.
- Choose to act (Actio): Trusting in God's nearness, commit to action rooted in love.

Time is provided for sharing responses to the question. Silence between responses is to be expected. Allow about 15 minutes for faith sharing. For larger groups, leader invites members to divide into groups of three or four for faith sharing.

- ✦ *When the sharing comes to an end, the leader invites everyone to take a moment to silently and reverently hold what has been shared together.*
- ✦ *Continue with the meeting, turning to the agenda.*

Concluding the meeting

At the end of the meeting, the leader closes with the following prayer:

Good and Gracious God,
your love for us surpasses all understanding.
As we leave here today,
be with us in all our comings and goings,
and in all that we say and do.
We pray this in the name of Christ Jesus who is our Light.
Amen.