

The Second Sunday of Advent: December 5, 2021

The Collect: Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Malachi 3:1-4: See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight-- indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Canticle 16 The Song of Zechariah

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; * he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior, * born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old, that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers * and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, * to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, * holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation * by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God * the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Philippians 1:3-11: I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Luke 3:1-6: In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

The Prayers of the People

I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. Prepare your hearts for his arrival, praying:

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, increase our love to overflowing. Make your Church pure and blameless that we may greet with joy the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Jennifer, our Bishop; Mauricio, Bishop of Brasilia; the Anglican Church of Burundi; for William and the people of Trinity; Anderson; and Debbie, our priest. We also pray for the Diocese of Haiti and St. Andres in Mithon.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, be present with the faith community of St. Alban's. Guide our leaders to make good decisions for our future, to create a place of ministry that is broader than we can imagine, with community partners who will impact the neighborhood around us in ways we cannot do alone.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, we long for the light of hope to break into our world, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide us into the way of peace. We pray that the Wall around Bethlehem and all other barriers come down.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, we pray for our leaders, that they may serve all people in ways that improve our world; we remember especially Joseph, our President; Kamala, our Vice President; Representatives; members of Congress; the Courts; Eric, our Governor; Joe and all our mayors; and all those in positions of authority who have been charged to serve all people.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, give us grace to heed the warning of those calling us to be better stewards of your creation. We thank you for all you have made, especially those things that sustain and better our lives.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, you lead us with joy; you delight in our joy. You clothe us in beauty. We give you thanks for your tender care.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, you remember your children. You do not leave us in sorrow or affliction. Crown your children with glory; clothe them with righteousness.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**

Merciful God, you have raised up for us salvation through your Son. Keep us, with all your saints in the eternal life of Christ.

Fill the valleys, make low the hills, **Come great Redeemer, come.**