



IN THE DESERT

Dec. 6, 2021 Mk. 1:1-8. Is 40:1-11. Second Sunday of Advent

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ENTERING THE SCENE:

Each Advent we are invited to slip into our inner quiet and prepare for the "way of the Lord." Crowds went out to hear John the Baptist because they were desperate for some good news. If a modern day John the Baptist appeared on the scene today, one wonders how big an audience he would get. Each age encounters its own version of oppression and woe. We certainly live in anxious times. Making a straight path for the coming of the Lord might be taking on a deeper meaning because of the world conditions. Let us each take time to be very honest with ourselves and others so as to open our hearts to whatever God is wanting to bring to us in this preparation time.

Mk. 1:1-8

1 The beginning of the **gospel** about Jesus Christ, the **Son of God.** 2 It is written in **Isaiah** the prophet: "I will send my **messenger** ahead of you, who will **prepare** your way" 3 a **voice** of one **calling** in the **desert**, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make **straight** paths for him.'" 4 And so **John** came, **baptizing** in the **desert**

region and **preaching** a **baptism** of **repentance** for the **forgiveness** of **sins.** 5 The whole **Judean** countryside and all the people of **Jerusalem** went out to him. **Confessing** their **sins**, they were **baptized** by him in the **Jordan** River. 6 **John** wore clothing made of **camel's hair**, with a **leather belt** around his waist, and he ate **locusts** and **wild honey.** 7 And this was his **message**: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose **sandals** I am not **worthy** to stoop down and untie. 8 I **baptize** you with **water**, but he will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit.**"

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Mark begins his gospel telling us that Jesus is the Son of God and spends the rest of his gospel telling us how that happened. What best prepares you this Advent for "the way of the Lord?"

PRAYER: Lord, I once again begin to deepen my preparations for the good news that John the Baptist proclaims in this text. His message of repentance rings as true for me as it must have for those around him all those many years ago. He invites me to examine my choices and present myself once again for a renewed and deepened commitment. Help me as I take quiet times to look within and open myself to the Holy Spirit. Amen.