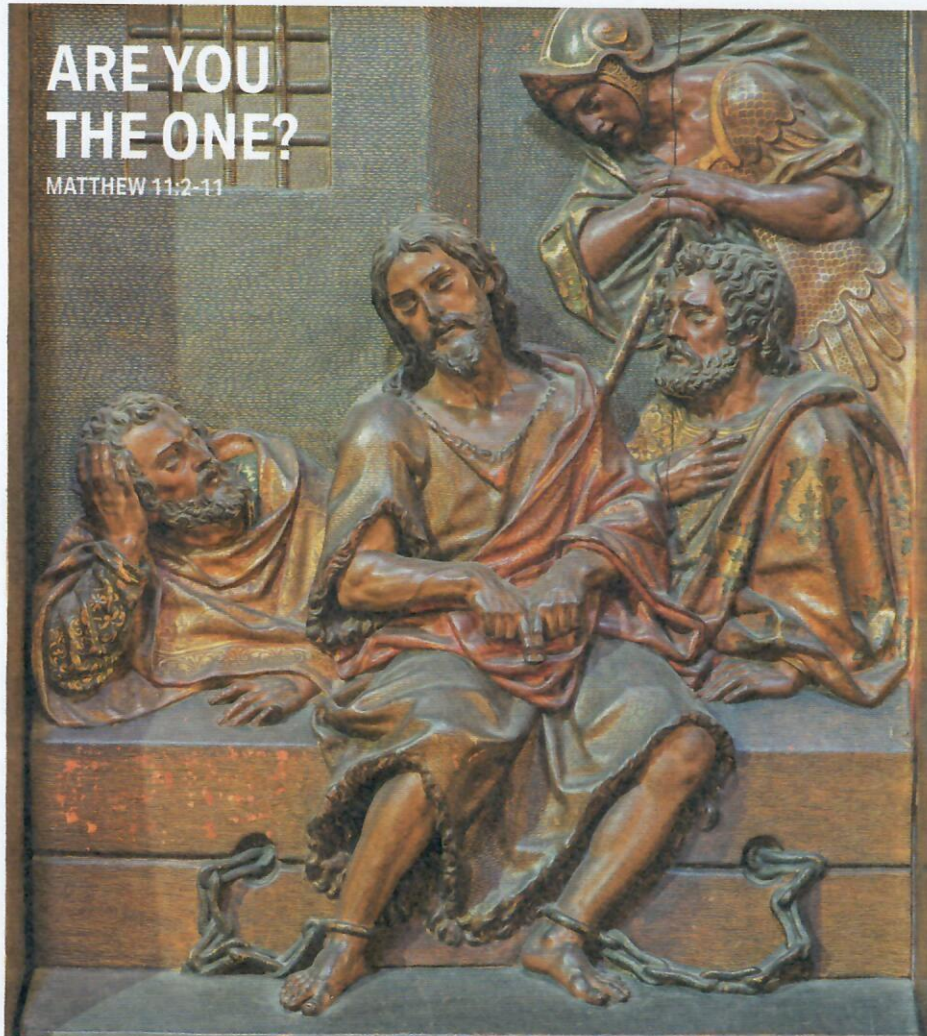


Sunday Message

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE WORD

Year A • 14 December 2025 • Psalter Week 3



ARE YOU THE ONE?

MATTHEW 11:2-11

This Gospel reading offers a rich moment of transition between the Old Testament expectation and the New Testament fulfilment. John the Baptist, representing the prophetic tradition of Israel, sends his disciples to Jesus with a pivotal question: "Are you the one who is to come?" His inquiry is not necessarily one of disbelief, but of seeking confirmation – asking whether Jesus truly fulfils the hopes spoken by the prophets.

Rather than offering a direct claim, Jesus points to His works. His answer echoes Isaiah's prophecies: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor receive good news. These are not random miracles, but signs that the long-awaited time of salvation has begun. Jesus allows the Scriptures to speak for Him.

The passage also offers a reflection on John's role. Though imprisoned and perhaps confused, John is praised by Jesus as the greatest among those born of women.

This Gospel encourages us to recognise how Jesus fulfils God's promises, not in dramatic displays, but in merciful action, quiet healing, and good news shared with the lowly.

This passage teaches us that God's work often unfolds differently from what is expected – and that recognising the signs requires humility, faith, and patience. ■

REFLECT

John the Baptist is in prison. He had spent his life preparing the way for the Messiah, but now, facing death, he begins to wonder: Is Jesus truly the One? So he sends messengers to ask, and Jesus answers not with a simple yes or no, but with evidence: "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Good News proclaimed to them."

Jesus is quietly fulfilling the words of Isaiah – not with spectacle or force, but with mercy, healing, and hope. This is God's way: humble, patient, and often surprising. John had imagined something more dramatic, but Jesus reveals a kingdom built on compassion, not domination.

This Gospel is perfect for Gaudete Sunday – the Sunday of joy. Not a shallow or noisy joy, but the deep joy that comes from knowing that God is truly at work, even when we don't fully understand His ways.

When we face doubt, disappointment, or delay, Jesus invites us to look again. Where is mercy happening? Where is grace quietly at work?

Today, we rejoice not because everything is perfect, but because Christ is near. And wherever He is, healing and hope are never far behind. ■

SAY

When I'm unsure,
Lord, give me peace.
When I can't see clearly,
let me still follow you.
Let your quiet grace be enough
for today.
Amen.

LEARN

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 548) teaches:

"The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent him. They invite belief in him. But for those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask. So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works."

DO

Take time each day to notice small signs of goodness – moments of kindness, healing, or encouragement – in your home, parish, or community. At the end of each day, thank God for one way His quiet work was visible.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.*

COLLECT

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING Isaiah 35:1-6a. 10

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;
it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who have an anxious heart,
'Be strong; fear not!
Behold, your God will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God.
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Sion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 146(145):6c-7. 8-9a. 9b-10
R. cf. Isaiah 35:4

R: Come, Lord, and save us.

Or **Alleluia.**

1. It is the LORD who preserves fidelity for ever,
who does justice to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the LORD who sets prisoners free. **R.**
2. It is the LORD who opens the eyes of the blind,
the LORD who raises up those who are bowed down.
It is the LORD who loves the just,
the LORD who protects the stranger. **R.**
3. The LORD upholds the orphan and the widow,
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The LORD will reign for ever,
your God, O Sion, from age to age. **R.**

SECOND READING James 5:7-10

A reading from the Letter of Saint James.

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)

R: Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;

he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor.

R: Alleluia.

GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'

And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

'What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you."

'Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray,
be offered to you unceasingly,
to complete what was begun in sacred mystery
and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We implore your mercy, Lord,
that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults
and prepare us for the coming feasts.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.