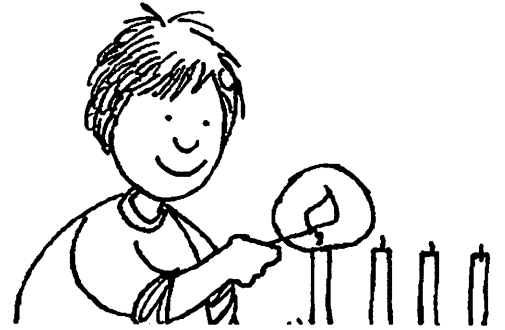


As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way;

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.  
- Mark 1:2-4



# Taking Our Hearts to the Lord

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Scripture Sharing Group Resource, Advent 2013, Week 1

**Reader 1:** A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (Mt 24:37-44)

*Stay awake so that you may be ready.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As it was in Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.

'So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this that if the householder had known at what time of night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Silence**

**Leader:** Let us read the Gospel passage aloud together.

**Everyone:** A Reading from the Holy Gospel ....

**Silence**

**Leader:** Let us listen to a short reflection on this Gospel passage.

**Reader 2:** Reflection on the Gospel

We might think that stress is a recent invention. The disciples and those who listened to Jesus had concerns in life too. Like us, they sought to balance the pressures of life with the things of God. No doubt they also had adages, as we have, to guide them: "People don't change" or "The world is an anxious/dangerous place!" Jesus explains to them that we all search among life's pleasures for deeper meaning. He recalls the people of Noah's time. They went on with their lives, oblivious to the impending flood. He tells us that is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

It is appropriate, as we are constantly reminded of the number of shopping days left. We begin the Season of Advent. Our time of waiting must hone our alertness. We are preparing for a life-changing event. Jesus wants us to be ready when it happens. We do not have room for distractions, however engrossed the world around us is. When the Son of Man comes, shall we be ready?

Jesus appeals for us to "Stay awake!" and to "Be prepared!" His message is for us, right now.

**Silence**

**Leader:** I invite you to share any thought or consideration prompted by the Gospel passage and /or the reflection.

**Sharing**

**Leader:** Let us return to our Advent Prayer.

*Group returns to page 20 of Advent booklet*

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