

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

These powerful words from Isaiah echo through Advent, calling us to prepare our hearts for God’s arrival. Matthew’s Gospel presents John the Baptist as the one urging people to clear space for Christ—to straighten the crooked, smooth the rough, and open the way for something new. For family and friends affected by addiction, this message resonates deeply. We know what it feels like to live in emotional deserts—places of fear, exhaustion, and uncertainty. Advent reminds us that God meets us precisely there.

The next two weeks invite us to welcome hope, love, joy, and peace into our homes and hearts. But preparation often means letting go: loosening our grip on expectations, releasing our attempts to control outcomes, and trusting that God is guiding both us *and* our loved ones. This unlearning—this *metanoia*—is essential in family recovery. We shed old patterns of rescuing or worrying and make room for God’s grace to flow.

For many of us, the path toward serenity felt blocked by anxiety or disappointment. Advent assures us that God is working to level the mountains of fear, fill the valleys of heartbreak, and straighten the winding roads of family dysfunction. When we acknowledge our powerlessness and surrender our loved ones to His care, we create space for God to restore what we cannot.

John the Baptist’s call to conversion is mirrored in the Twelve Steps: honesty, surrender, amends, and living one day at a time. Our struggles—whether with enabling, resentment, or fear—are not signs of failure but invitations to deeper freedom. As we shift from self-reliance to God-reliance, our perspective changes. Peace begins to take root, not because circumstances are fixed, but because our hearts are being transformed.

Ralph Waldo Emerson observed, “There are three wants which never can be satisfied: the rich wanting more, the sick wanting different, and the traveler wanting anywhere but here.” Families affected by addiction often feel all three. Advent helps us return to the present moment—the only place God can meet us. When we rest in His presence, hope becomes possible even in the waiting.

This season invites us to prepare—not through perfection, but through openness. God is already at work leveling the landscape of our hearts, smoothing old wounds, and guiding us toward peace. We simply make room, ask for willingness, and trust Him to do the rest.

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Isaiah 11:1-10

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 7

SECOND READING Romans 15:4-9

GOSPEL Matthew 3:1-12

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How is God smoothing or reshaping the emotional landscape of your family recovery journey?
- Where are you beginning to notice new hope, love, joy, or peace emerging?
- What attitudes or patterns is God inviting you to release this Advent so your heart can open more fully to Him?

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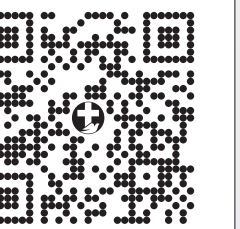
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