

Gospel Reflection

Open our hearts in welcome

The heart is a remarkable thing. It beats about 70 times a minute, every minute of every day of our lives. It pumps millions of gallons of blood throughout our body without stopping. It contains some 40,000 neurons, and it began to beat within us even before our brain was formed.

Traditionally, the heart has been seen as the seat of emotion, wisdom, and love. Literature is filled with imagery related to it. People are said to be “single-hearted” or “broken-hearted” or to have a “heart of gold,” for example.

In today’s Gospel, John the Baptist is calling us to “prepare the way of the Lord.” In this month, in which we will spend so many hours preparing for Christmas, John emerges not just as a herald to people 2000 years ago, but also to us, here and now, as we scurry from one task to another.

He calls us to prepare our hearts. We must deck our hearts with joy as we deck the halls. We must write the Word of God in our hearts as we write our Christmas cards. We must open the doors of our hearts in welcome to Christ every time we open the front door of our homes. Then, on that great day when Our Lord comes, we will be found worthy and ready!

-Elena Cardeña, Faith Formation Director

KEEPING FAITH FIRST FAMILY FUN

Matthew 3:1-12

W I N N O W I N G A T P V
W Q H P A R O B A I H R O
U H B V E D A X R F Z E I
H R E T Y P R I M H H P C
N G A A T C P O X A Q A E
W W O I T S F N J I D R Q
J Z S O Y E E R T A K E I
D M I L D F U C E S H S C
E U O A I F B T Q I K Y T
V H E R Q C R C H A F F T
T R E S E D L U M N S D A
I H S W K M J M I H Y L T
A L E G P L I Q D T D P Z

Find these words from the Gospel passage.

BAPTISM	CHAFF	DESERT
FAN	FIRE	GOOD FRUIT
HOLY SPIRIT	ISAIAH	JORDAN
PREPARE	TREE	VOICE
WATER	WHEAT	WINNOWER

Disciple's Reflection & Questions of the Week

*Second Sunday of Advent
12/9/07*

*Matthew 3:1-12
Faith-Sharing
Questions of the Week*



Our Lady of the Assumption

435 Berkeley Ave.
Claremont, CA
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Call to Prayer

We begin by calling upon God:

**In the Name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

*We then pause for a moment to listen with
our hearts to this week's Gospel passage...*

The Word of God: *Matthew 3:1-12*

The Gospel according to Matthew:

John the Baptist appeared preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: *A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.*

John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. At that time, Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

"Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals.

"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His **winnowing** fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing room floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the **chaff** he will burn with unquenchable fire."

The Gospel of the Lord



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Gospel Glossary

Winnowing: the process of separating grain from its husks (chaff)

Chaff: the inedible outer seed coverings removed from grain before it can be used

Faith Sharing

Questions of the Week

- How do I open my heart to the Lord in my every-day life? How could I be more open to him?
- In what ways does John the Baptist's message challenge me ?

Closing Prayer

God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy, so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Second Sunday of Advent