

Fourth Day of Advent
December 4, 2024

*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. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.' **Mark 1: 1-8**

I believe this reading is very appropriate for us to prepare for Jesus' birth as did John the Baptist. As the prophet Isaiah wrote, "I will send a messenger ahead of you who will prepare the way." We are directed in this verse to make the paths straight for him. John the Baptist preached a baptism (water) of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. This is a small price for us to pay for what Jesus will be doing for us when he baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. During this Advent Season, let's make a concentrated effort to prepare a straight path for Jesus.

Delores Ivan