Third Sunday of Advent
13 December 2026

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading **Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I exult for joy in the Lord.

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

'I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.'

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm **Luke 1:46-50, 53-54**

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **R.**

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!

His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. **R.**

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. **R.**

OR

Seasonal Psalm: SUNG

R. To you, O God, I lift my soul,
oh keep me free from shame.
I place my trust in you alone:
your promise and your name.

Let not the ones who wish me harm
rejoice to see me stumble.
No one is shamed who waits for you;
you raise the weak and humble. **R.**

Your ways, O God, make known to me;
your path be my vocation.
Lead me in truth and teach me well,
my God and my salvation. **R.**

Throughout the day I wait for you:
your steadfast grace and mercy.
Remember not my youthful sins,
but, in your love, forgive me. **R.**

Second Reading **1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

A reading from first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything - hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation **Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)**

Alleluia, alleluia!
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia!

Gospel **John 1:6-8, 19-28**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.

A man came, sent by God.
His name was John.
He came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light,
so that everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light,
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

> a voice that cries in the wilderness:
> Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you unknown to you the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to

undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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