

By the Preaching of Repentance, We Are Prepared for the Coming of the Lord



Background: John the Baptist's mission was to make straight the pathways for our God or turn people from sinfulness to living a sanctified life. Changing lives requires repentance. To say your sorry and “please forgive me” is not enough. It means changing your way of living, so you no longer repeat the same sins over and over. How can this be done? Confess the sin. Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us in living the sanctified life. Recognize that when you confess your sins prior to the Lord’s

Saint John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness Pier Francesco Mola (1612-'66) Supper and Pastor proclaims “Your sins are forgiven”, that is exactly what happened. When you receive Christ’s Body and blood in the Sacrament, Christ is now living with you. Living with Christ guides our ways in this world. Performing regular devotions and participating in Bible studies empowers our understanding of living the sanctified life.

The Lessons: Isaiah 11:1–10, Romans 15:4–13, & Matthew 3:1–12

“John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent’” (Matt. 3:1–2). His preaching of repentance for the forgiveness of sins prepared people for the coming of Christ into the world. St. John’s work was historically complete with the incarnate advent of Jesus, but his vital ministry continues in preaching Law and Gospel. The Son of God has come in the flesh, “a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots” (Is. 11:1), and continues to bear the fruits of righteousness. His good tree of the cross is “a signal for the peoples” (Is. 11:10), by which He calls the nations to repentance. “With the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips” (Is. 11:4), He slays the wicked and brings the dead to life, making sons of Abraham out of lifeless stones. So also the “root of Jesse” comes to us, “even he who arises to rule the Gentiles” (Rom. 15:12), that “we might have hope” and be filled “with all joy and peace in believing” (Rom. 15:4)