

Peace is....Preparing the Way of the Lord!

2 Peter 3: 11,12,14 “....*what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God... be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace.*”

Mark 1: 2-3 **As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:**
*Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way.
A voice of one crying out in the desert:
“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”*

Reflection: *What does it mean to prepare the way of the Lord?*

The scriptures tell us to conduct ourselves in holiness and devotion so that we will be found without spot or blemish before Him and at peace. *To live in holiness and devotion*, we must focus on our prayer life, reminding ourselves of His constant presence with us, and trying to live as true followers of Christ as every opportunity presents itself. *To be found without spot or blemish* reminds us to go to confession, to be cleansed by the Lord Himself, as He helps us prepare for His coming. This preparation is a very personal one, one in which we are renewed and rededicated. It requires slowing ourselves down from the hectic pace of the season in order to spend time and energy focusing on Jesus. *What are we preparing for?* We want to encounter the Lord in a special way this Christmas, welcoming the Christ child, the newborn Son of God, into our hearts anew.

How do we make straights His paths?

We start by changing ourselves, whether by altering our outlook or giving up a bad habit. We right wrongs. We add light to the darkness of the world we live in. *How?* By improving the condition of society. By helping the plight of others: One person at a time. We can go to a home for children and offer our time, perhaps holding a baby or playing with a child whose parents are in drug rehab. We can enjoy a meal or a visit with someone who lives alone. Perhaps we can pay a visit to the Whiting/Robertsdale Convalescent Center; or help clean out a home destroyed by the September flooding in Munster or Gary. We can make a donation to the “Adopt-a-Baby” Advent Outreach program, to help support those women who have chosen not to have an abortion. We can pray for an end to abortion in our country, and for the conversion of those who wish to make abortion-on-demand the law. There is so much need. All we have to do is reach out to others in a positive way, with true caring. No gift is too small. If we all contribute even a little, the world will be a better place in which all of us can live.

We must remember to be patient. As God is patient with us, so must we try to be patient with ourselves and with others. We also have to remind ourselves to be patient with God! As our best parent He answers our prayers in the way and in the timing that is for the good. His answer is not always the one that we expect. Sometimes we don’t even recognize it until years later. But we know and trust that He always hears and answers us in the most loving way that we can imagine, because He is an Awesome God!

Action:

- **Think of some things you can do on a regular basis for the coming year to help others, and commit to doing one of them.**
- **Get caught up in the Awesome-ness of Christmas, rather than the consumerism of the commercial Christmas season.**
- **Give up something for the remainder of Advent, as you do for Lent, as a way to prepare yourself, to “make room” for the Christ Child in your heart.**