

someone, something different. Jesus, recognising God's grace, says: 'Happy is the man who doesn't lose faith in me'.

The messengers leave and Jesus declares John to be the greatest of the prophets; but, he continues, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater still. John's greatness only serves to highlight the fullness of life to which

we are called; but, it is a fullness, a greatness, made real by doing what Jesus does – like the disciples he sent out previously – listening to, inviting into our midst those with no one to turn to. Is this the one we're expecting this Advent?

Damian Coleridge
© Majellan 2019



We Respond ...

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 145)

ANTIPHON: Lord, come and save us.

RESPONSE (R): Lord, come and save us.

Or

Alleluia.

LECTOR: It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever; who is just to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry; the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **R.**

LECTOR: It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, who raises up those who are bowed down, the Lord, who protects the stranger and upholds the widow and orphan. **R.**

LECTOR: It is the Lord who loves the just but thwarts the path of the wicked. The Lord will reign for ever; Zion's God, from age to age. **R.**

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

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn). Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

TODAY'S READINGS Isaiah 35:1-6, 10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

NEXT WEEK (4th Sunday of Advent, Year A) Isaiah 7:10-14; Ps 23; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

Win an iPad Mini

Enter our draw to have a chance to win an iPad mini. All you need to do is tell us in 25 words or less what Christmas means to you and your family. It's that easy. Go to Majellan.media/christmascomp for Terms and Conditions and to enter or write to us at Majellan Publications PO Box 43 Brighton Victoria 3186. Please include with your entry, your name, address and email. Competition ends on December 31, 2019.

Real Meaning of Christmas

The Majellan Christmas cards are always popular because they depict the real meaning of Christmas. So, you better hurry or you may miss out. A packet of 10 cards and envelopes costs \$7.50 including postage. Order now by contacting us at 03 9592 2777 or office@majellan.org.au



Amidst the rush of the 'festive season', who are we expecting this Advent? A Messiah perhaps? If so, what sort of Messiah do we imagine will turn up? John the Baptist, in prison, sends messengers enquiring of Jesus are you the one, or must we wait for another?

Last week John declared Jesus was the one who is to come – as the prophet Isaiah had foretold – but now he's not so sure. He's puzzled by what he's heard. Jesus responds by saying, "go and tell John what's been happening throughout Galilee". What disorients John is that not only does Jesus instruct, he also heals the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf, the poor, and those with no one to turn to. A new creation is happening – a re-creation – and Matthew's gospel has called our attention to it from the beginning.

The ascetic, prophetic John of last week – calling people to repent, dressed in camel hair and eating off the land – has told of the one who will bring a fierce judgment. So,

who is this? Is this what the prophets foretold? Yes, Jesus calls people to repentance, but, by calling up the words of the prophet Isaiah again, lets it be known these healings are a sign of the new age that the Messiah will usher in: the kingdom of heaven is here.

The question for all of us at this time is what have we seen and heard this year? What is happening among us? Do the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, do the poor get dental care, the homeless a place to live? Is the good news good for them? Is Jesus the one, or must we look around for another? These questions are being asked of us, all the more pointedly at this moment, which is why we have to make a response.

If there are no signs, or few that we can discern, then we might, like John in prison, become more and more uncertain of this person and wonder whether he is the one we continue to say he is. And we may turn away from him, because we had expected