

‘WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS CHRISTMAS?’ *‘I’M PREPARING THE WAY’*  
2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT 2019

### THE GIFT OF HOPE

This Advent we ask ourselves about the wonderful gift of hope.

*How we pass on that hope to the next generation?  
How do we prepare for that?*

In the ideal of the first reading from Isaiah 11:1-10 enemies and rivals becoming friends.  
The wolf and lamb together peacefully.  
The panther and kid. The calf and lion.  
Despite all the challenges we face today with greed and self-interest,  
There are good times, and occasional glimpses of the vision of Isaiah in reality.

### NEWS FROM OUR SISTER PARISH OF BLACKALL / TAMBO

This weekend we hear at all Masses from the members of our parish who travelled recently to our sister parish of Blackall/Tambo in central Queensland. We will hear stories of challenges, hardship, solidarity and friendship. And signs of hope. Isaiah invites us to never give up hope.

*[Our parish family members now come up to share stories of their visit to Blackall]*

### PREPARING THE WAY

Like John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew, we do not give up. We are called to see reality and bring hope in many practical ways. Like John the Baptist, we prepare the way for people to hear the Good News of Jesus. How will we prepare the way this Christmas?

[pause]

### HOW DO WE REPENT?

We are called through the grace of God to enable Good to overcome evil.  
*What are five ways we can do that this week?  
Being honest before God, for what are we truly sorry?*

[pause]

### OUR NEIGHBOUR

Matthew’s Gospel expands on this in the Last Judgement Scene 25:31-46.  
Feeding the hungry,  
Giving something to drink to the thirsty,  
Clothes to the naked,  
Welcoming the stranger,  
Taking care of the sick,  
Visiting the prisons.

We think of our Christmas hamper collection in the parish for families of prisoners. We think of our local parish St Vincent de Paul Society members distributing hampers to local people in need in our suburbs.

We think of our bucket collections to Blackall/ Tambo and South Sudan.

John the Baptist could not stand by. He was involved.

During this season of Advent,

- *For whom do we pray?*
- *How do we see Jesus in our neighbour?*
- *What moral issues do we face as Australians?*
- *How do we prepare the way?*

## SAMOA

In our community are parish members with family, friends, relatives and others in Samoa. With Samoa's current health challenge we pause and pray for them.

[pause]

Over the coming year, Matthew's Gospel will show a light to guide us – the light of Jesus.

When someone asks you what are you doing this Advent or Christmas say *'I'm preparing the way'*

*What will you say when they ask you what you mean?*

*Are you preparing the way alone?*

*Through the grace of God, are we preparing the way together?*

Let us pray.

Fr Gerry

[Readings: <https://universalis.com/20191208/mass.htm>]



*St. John the Baptist Preaching, c. 1665, by Mattia Preti*