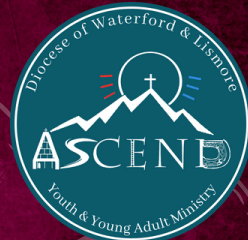




# To the Heights



2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Subscribe to receive by email!



Year A

Hear



Click the Bible image for this week's readings if you don't have a Bible handy!

## Sunday Mass Readings

**First Reading:**

Isaiah 11:1-10

**Responsorial Psalm:**

Psalm 71(72): 1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17

**Second Reading:**

Romans 15:4-9

**Gospel:**

Matthew 3:1-12

[www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry](http://www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry)



ascendwaterfordlismore.ym



AscendWaterfordLismoreYM



Ascend Youth Ministry



*"A voice cries in the wilderness:  
Prepare a way for the Lord, make his  
paths straight."*

## Game Changers

**The Catholic Church's Liturgical Calendar is crammed full of inspirational saints and heroes, or as we like to call them, Game Changers! Check them out on our web page!**

6 December

St Nicholas

7 December

St Ambrose

8 December

Immaculate Conception

9 December

St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin

10 December

Our Lady of Loreto



**Ascend  
Advent  
Playlist!**



## Reflect



1. What was the main message of John the Baptist?
2. Describe John's appearance.
3. Why did people flock to John the Baptist?
4. How did John speak to the Pharisees and Sadducees?
5. What reference does he make to Jesus in this passage?
6. Why do you think John divided opinion so much through his preaching?



## CHECK IT OUT:

## A SAINT A DAY: 365 STORIES OF FAITH &amp; HEROISM

"A Saint a Day includes fascinating historical stories as it introduces young readers to over 300 saints who did extraordinary things for God. This daily devotional for kids is: An ideal gift for First Communion, Confirmation, or Advent. As you journey through this year long devotional, your children will grow in their understanding of Church history and better understand how they can love and serve God." Book by Meredith Hinds: available at Easons



Never give up on God because He never gives up on you.  
**ARE YOU READY?**

In this Gospel passage, we hear about Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, who lived a radical and unconventional lifestyle in response to a personal call by God to prepare the way for the Messiah. John understood that a genuine conversion of heart would be necessary to really accept the Messiah' message. He wanted people to repent and believe, to prepare a way for the Messiah.

Can you imagine how someone like John the Baptist would be viewed in today's world? Do you think his message is still relevant today?

In the Catholic tradition, one of the most beautiful and healing sacraments is the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession. It is a chance to take stock of our lives, see what is going well and not so well, see what is hindering us from drawing close to God and what we need forgiveness for. God's mercy is freely available to us. He doesn't just offer to mend our broken hearts: He puts a new heart in us each time we go to confession, and strengthens us so we can follow the path to Heaven again!

## TUNE OF THE WEEK



Prepare the Way

Charlie Hall



## WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

Take some time over the next few days or weeks to make a good examination of conscience. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you try to remember any areas of your life where you failed in your relationship with God, others or yourself; times where you failed to show love or even deliberately ignored God's will or guidance for your life. Find out when your local church has confessions and decide to go. You can pray for the priest in advance too!



**Confession is a place of Victory**  
(Fr Mike Schmitz)



## Young Person's Prayer



## ACT OF SORROW:

O my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins; for not loving others and not loving You. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen

## Hidden Message

UNSCRAMBLE THE LETTERS TO DISCOVER THE WORDS FROM TODAY'S GOSPEL, THEN PIECE TOGETHER THE GOSPEL PHRASE BELOW!

SAPBTI

OODBR

SPERIV

ISEPEASHR

SEJRMELUA

AHCFF

SEESDWILNR

REARPP

ERPENT

LNASDSA

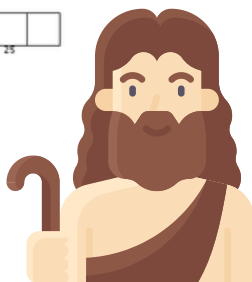
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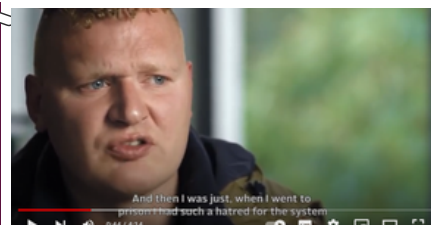




Pick one line from the gospel to reflect on this week!



## TESTIMONY TIME



Alpha Testimony: Shane Taylor

## WHAT'S ON

## Advent Reflections in the Diocese:

- Park Hotel Dungarvan, 7.30pm, 5 Dec, 'Journeying with Advent Hope', Frances Rowland
- Minella Hotel Clonmel, 7.30pm, 12 Dec, 'Waiting through Advent, with Mary' - Gemma Mulligan

**Youth 2000 Christmas Retreat:** 9 - 11 December, Newbridge, for young people aged 16 - 35. Donation only. Book online at [www.youth2000.ie](http://www.youth2000.ie)

**Advent Family Day at Holy Family Mission.** Sunday 4th December, 10am - 3pm. Booking is essential: email [info@holymission.ie](mailto:info@holymission.ie)

**REnewal Rosary Making Workshop for RE Teachers.** Practical workshop on how to make twine rosaries with your students, plus other rosary resources, 25 Feb, 11am - 1pm. For more info email [events@waterfordlismore.ie](mailto:events@waterfordlismore.ie) Register before Dec 15th to facilitate ordering of materials.



CHECK OUT THE  
CATECHISM OF THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
SAYS ABOUT  
CONFESSION  
CCC 1423-1424



MATTHEW 3:1-12

# PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE LORD

"Confession is a place  
of victory!"  
Fr Mike Schmitz

DO YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ADMIT WHEN YOU'RE WRONG?  
DO YOU FIND IT HARD TO GO TO CONFESSION? WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?  
SHARE WITH ANOTHER PERSON IF YOU ARE HAPPY TO.



WHAT KIND OF THINGS MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE TO GO TO CONFESSION?

WHAT DO YOU IMAGINE CONFESSION IS LIKE FROM A PRIEST'S PERSPECTIVE?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ, "CONFESSION IS A PLACE OF VICTORY"  
(ASCENSION PRESENTS) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



Fr Mike describes confession as **"one of the most joyful, humble and inspiring places in the world"**. Does this surprise you? Why (or why not)?

## THREE THINGS THE PRIEST SEES IN CONFESSION:

### 1. THE COSTLY MERCY OF GOD IN ACTION.



People who are **discouraged** being \_\_\_\_\_

People who are **wounded** being \_\_\_\_\_

People who are **lost** being \_\_\_\_\_

People who are t \_\_\_\_\_

People saying: "I'm not going to give up on the God who won't \_\_\_\_\_"

### 2. THE HUMAN PERSON, PART OF GOD'S MASTERPIECE.

Fr Mike says sins are like \_\_\_\_\_. That means that priests are like God's  
\_\_\_\_\_ collectors!

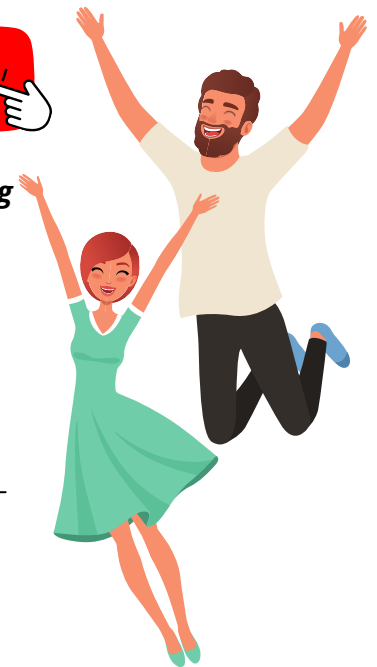
"Sins are boring". What is fascinating / memorable is the \_\_\_\_\_



### 3. THE PRIEST'S OWN SOUL AND HIS OWN HEART.

Sometimes a priest will recognise something in their own life when they hear another  
confess it. It can act as an examination of \_\_\_\_\_ for the priest himself.

- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -



# PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

MATTHEW 3:1-12



Fr Mike's father was a surgeon who saved lives and healed bodies. What did he say his son (Fr Mike) would do with his priest's hands?

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## CONFESSION IS A PLACE OF VICTORY.

THE PRIEST HEARING CONFESSIONS GETS TO SEE GOD WINNING HIS CHILDREN BACK, EVERY SINGLE DAY!



Has this video changed / added to your understanding of confession in any way? What struck you the most from Fr Mike's explanation?

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## Now Read Matthew 3:1-12



In this Gospel passage, we hear about Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, who lived a radical and unconventional lifestyle in response to a personal call by God to prepare the way for the Messiah. John understood that a genuine conversion of heart would be necessary to really accept the Messiah' message. He wanted people to repent and believe, to prepare a way for the Messiah. Can you imagine how someone like John the Baptist would be viewed in today's world? Do you think his message is still relevant today? In the Catholic tradition, one of the most beautiful and healing sacraments is the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession. It is a chance to take stock of our lives, see what is going well and not so well, see what is hindering us from drawing close to God and what we need forgiveness for. God's mercy is freely available to us. He doesn't just offer to mend our broken hearts: He puts a new heart in us each time we go to confession, and strengthens us so we can follow the path to Heaven again!



### MISSION!

TAKE SOME TIME OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS OR WEEKS TO MAKE A GOOD EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE. ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GUIDE YOU AS YOU TRY TO REMEMBER ANY AREAS OF YOUR LIFE WHERE YOU FAILED IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, OTHERS OR YOURSELF; TIMES WHERE YOU FAILED TO SHOW LOVE OR DELIBERATELY IGNORED GOD'S WILL OR GUIDANCE FOR YOUR LIFE. FIND OUT WHEN YOUR LOCAL CHURCH HAS CONFESSIONS AND DECIDE TO GO. YOU CAN PRAY FOR THE PRIEST IN ADVANCE TOO!



### PRAYER TIME!

#### ACT OF SORROW:

O my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins; for not loving others and not loving You. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON FORGIVENESS AND HEALING



- [From the Inside Out \(Hillsong\)](#)
- [Prepare the Way \(Charlie Hall\)](#)
- [Thank You \(Jesus Army\)](#)
- [Lord have mercy \(MW Smith\)](#)
- [All who are thirsty \(Brenton Brown\)](#)
- [Here's my heart Lord \(David Crowder\)](#)
- [Misericordias Domini \(Taize\)](#)
- [O Come to the Altar \(Elevation Worship\)](#)

Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



Making a Good Confession  
Fr Mike Schmitz



How do I go to  
Confession? ODB Films



Examination of Conscience  
(NET USA)



The Chosen: Jesus forgives  
Mary Magdalen Scene