

## This Week's Readings

### First Reading: Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11.

Isaiah gives Israel some comforting news: God is coming to save his people. He urges Israel to prepare a way for him.

### Second Reading: 2 Peter 3: 8-14.

If the Lord is slow in coming, it is only so that all may have a chance to repent and be worthy to meet him when he comes.

### Gospel: Mark 1: 1-8.

John the Baptist brings God's people to spiritual renewal while recognizing the greatness of Jesus, the One who was to come.



## Points for Reflection

**When Jesus was about to start his public life, John appeared on the scene to urge people to "conversion",** so that they might be ready to welcome Jesus and start a new life with him, who was about to baptize them in the Holy Spirit. But, since the coming of Christ goes on forever until his last coming at the end of times, there is always an Advent going on, and in this Advent people need to hear again and again the words of John the Baptist: ***"Make ready the way of the Lord!"***  
**Reform your lives!**

1. **In the Church's preaching this call is addressed first to those who do not yet know Christ and his Gospel.** Baptism, therefore, is the principal place for the first and fundamental conversion.
2. **The call to conversion, however, continues to resound in the lives of Christians, in our lives, too. This "second conversion" is an interrupted task for the whole Church,** who, at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal.
  - **The call to conversion and penance does not aim first at outward works...**fasting and mortification, but at the "conversion of the heart", "interior conversion". Without this, such practices remain sterile and false.
  - **"Interior conversion" is a radical re-orientation of our whole life,** a return to God with all our heart; an end to sin, a turning away from evil, with hatred for the evil actions we have committed. And this is possible only because we hope in God's mercy and trust in the

help of his grace. God alone can make our hearts return to him and can give us the strength to begin anew.

- **Conversion is accomplished in daily life by gestures of reconciliation and concern for the needy**, by the admission of faults to one's brothers and sisters, brotherly correction and acceptance of suffering, by taking up one's cross each day and following Jesus (See "Catechism of the Catholic Church", Numbers 1427-1435).

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## Kids' Corner

*Colour the picture below of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus with water.*

**Mark 1: 9**



<http://applesaucekids.com/Coloring/BillLaza/JesuBapt.html>