

# A Letter from Fr. Patrick Kizza

December 14, 2025

The readings for this Third Sunday of Advent invite us into a deep meditation on hope—hope that blooms even in the driest deserts of our lives. Isaiah paints a beautiful image: *“The desert and the parched land will exult... they will bloom with abundant flowers.”* (Isa 35:1). God promises that what seems barren, lifeless, or hopeless can suddenly become vibrant with new life. Many of us know what “desert days” feel like: the long wait for medical results, a child struggling in school, tension in relationships, or the loneliness that creeps in after the holidays. Yet Isaiah reminds us that God is the One who makes flowers bloom where no one expected life to grow.

St. Augustine once wrote, *“God is closer to us than we are to ourselves.”* Even when we cannot see Him at work, He is already transforming our deserts into gardens. A mother once shared that during a difficult year, every prayer felt dry. But later she realized that those “dry prayers” were the very ones that strengthened her faith. She said, *“The desert made me lean on God instead of myself.”* That is exactly what Isaiah invites us to do: to strengthen feeble hands, make firm weak knees, and say to fearful hearts: *“Be strong, fear not! Here is your God.”*

In the second reading, St. James speaks directly to our modern world: *“Be patient... make your hearts firm.”* (Jas 5:8) Patience is one of the hardest Christian virtues today. We live in a culture of instant answers—instant food, instant messages, instant deliveries. Yet spiritual growth cannot be rushed. James offers the simple image of a farmer waiting for the precious fruit of the earth. No matter how much he wants the crops to grow faster, he must trust the rain, the soil, and God’s timing. As C.S. Lewis famously said, *“We must lay before Him what is in us, not what ought to be in us.”* In other words, come to God as you are, and let Him work at His pace.

The Gospel brings us to John the Baptist, who from his prison cell sends a haunting question to Jesus: *“Are you the one who is to come?”* Even the greatest prophet experienced doubt. Yet Jesus does not rebuke him. He simply points to the evidence of God’s work: the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, and the poor receive good news. Jesus reminds us that God often reveals Himself not with loud announcements, but in everyday miracles—reconciliation between relatives, healing of a long-held grief, or the unexpected kindness of a stranger. Pope Benedict XVI once wrote, *“The world is redeemed by the patience of God and ruined by the impatience of man.”* Advent invites us to enter God’s patient, gentle work in our lives.

**On this Sunday of joy, I am profoundly grateful for our Religious Director and all our catechists who generously guide our children in faith.** For our Advent event this year, our Religious Education students focused on the Jesse Tree, a beautiful Advent meditation on the story of salvation. They discovered how God planned from the very beginning to send Jesus as our Savior, just as He lovingly planned each of their lives. Every class was assigned a different figure from the Jesse Tree and helped tell that person’s story in salvation history by creating a visual symbol for them. These wonderful creations are now displayed in the gathering space and in the hallways on either side of the church for our parishioners to enjoy and learn from.

As we continue this Advent journey, may we learn from Isaiah, James, and John the Baptist. May we trust that God can bring life out of our deserts, that His timing is perfect, and that His presence is already healing and transforming our lives—often in ways we do not yet see.

May joy find a home in our hearts this week. Amen.