

(Second Sunday of Advent — December 10, 2017)

1st Reader: This is the second Sunday in Advent. Today, we light two purple candles. Last Sunday, we lit the candle of peace. This Sunday, we light the candle of love. One verse that many memorize and remember on this day is John 3:16, "God so loved the world..." Some people may not know the love of other people. That makes it harder for them to understand God's love. During Advent, we pray that we may remember again God's gift of Jesus to the world and know that God's love for all people is the reason for this gift.

(Light the first and second candles.)

2nd Reader: When we look at the second candle, we remember God's love. When we read the words of Scripture, we know of God's greatness and care. We remember God's love at Advent when we remember that God sent Jesus to us to help us know that God is loving and just.

1st Reader: Read Isaiah 40:1-8.

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

3 A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. 5 And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

6 A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. 7 The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

2nd Reader: When we think of God's love, we might not always think of the words of the prophets. And this verse might not be one that comes to mind. But the image of God comforting people is a loving image. The image of God making the rough way smooth is one of love.

Prayer:

Dear God: Thank you for your son, Jesus. Thank you for the words found in our Bible that help us remember your love and care. Help us see how we can bring God's message to the people we meet in our schools, at our jobs, and in our neighborhoods. Help us be messengers of God's love for everyone.

Amen.