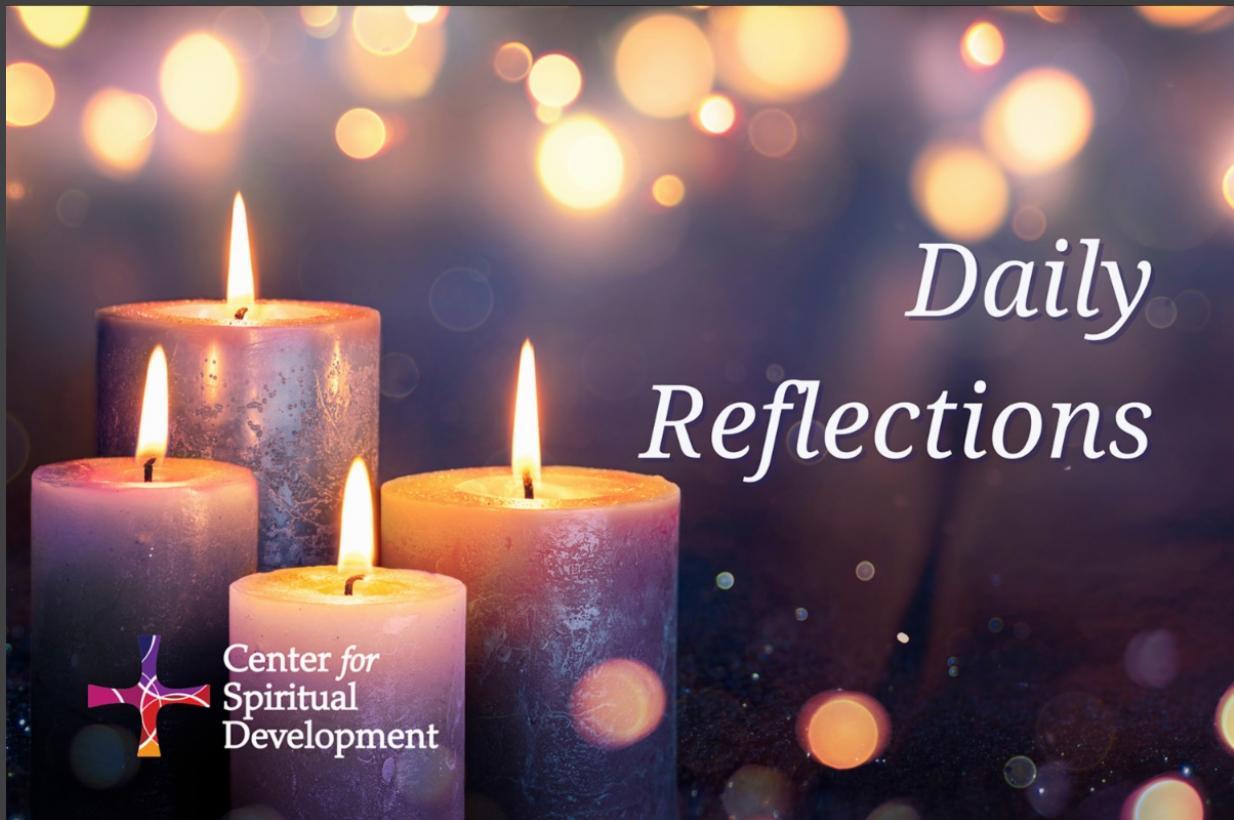


December 11, 2025



## PREPARE THE WAY FOR CHRIST

By Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

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### Excerpts from Today's Readings

*I will help you, says the Lord; your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.*

**ISAIAH 41:14**

*The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness.*

**PSALM 145:8**

*Among those born of woman there has been none greater than John the Baptist.*

**MATTHEW 11:11**

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**Reflection**

As Advent continues to unfold, we begin to turn our attention to John the Baptist, the great forerunner of Christ. Our readings today remind us that God is both our strength and our redeemer. John the Baptist provides the prophetic witness and helps prepare our hearts to welcome Christ with joy, humility, and courage.

In Isaiah 41, we once again hear words of comfort and consolation: “Do not fear, I will help you.” At this point in Israel’s history, the people are tired and worn down by being in exile. God is reassuring them that God will transform their desert into fertile land and their weaknesses into strength.

This is the same message we ought to hear for ourselves today. For God, nothing is impossible. In the wastelands of our life, often hidden from others, God will till the soil and allow our love to blossom. If our hearts are closed for any reason, God is the key to unlocking our hearts and releasing us from all that binds.

In Psalm 145, we are reminded of God’s compassion, tenderness and love. We are each being invited to cultivate this same type of mercy and presence to those who are struggling or burdened by their life circumstances.

In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus calls John the Baptist the greatest ever born of woman – yet the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. This can seem like a head-scratcher until we remember that John belongs to the Old Covenant; he points us forward to Jesus Christ. John’s greatness is found in his humility because he knows he’s not the Messiah; rather, he is preparing the way for Jesus. A poignant question can be posed to us today – can we pause and allow God to take center stage in our lives?

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## For Pondering

- Reflect on the last question posed above: do you pause and allow God to be center stage in your life? What are ways you can build pauses in your day to reflect on God's inbreaking presence and continue to build your relationship with God?
- In the inner terrain of your being, might there be spots or areas of "wasteland" where somehow God has been blocked? Where might you need to allow God to help you blossom a bit more to be the person God created you to be?

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## For Prayer

*As we continue this Advent journey,  
let us always keep in mind God's words to us,  
"Do not fear, I will help you."*

*Let us each be a living witness by tending to the terrain of our hearts  
and allowing God to continually transform our lives.*

*Amen.*

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