Teaching the Liturgical Year:
Third Week of Advent

A Reading from the Gospel of John 1:6–8, 19–28: John the Baptist’s Testimony to Himself

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, “Who are you?” he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, “I am not the Christ.” So they asked him, “What are you then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.” So they said to him, “Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?” He said: “I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, ‘make straight the way of the Lord,’ as Isaiah the prophet said.” Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.” This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Focus Questions

1. Why was John sent by God?

2. Whom did John tell the people that he was not?

3. Whom did John tell the people that he was?

4. What did the Pharisees ask John?

5. What did John tell the Pharisees he was doing? Who was coming after him?

6. Who do you think John was speaking of, who would come after him?
Expectations

Part 1:
Describe a time when your expectations were exceeded. In other words, how was what actually happened better or greater than what you thought would happen? What were your expectations? What ended up happening? How did you feel afterward?

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Part 2:
The book of Revelation gives us a peek at what Heaven will be like:

I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, God’s dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them [as their God]. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, [for] the old order has passed away.” (Revelation 21:2-4)

Based on this description and other things that you have learned and know about Heaven, describe below what you think Heaven will be like.