

## MARK 1:2-3

## THE BEGINNING

<sup>2</sup> *It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"—*<sup>3</sup> *"a voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"*

A part of the good news is that the story did not begin with the incarnation. Just as John's Gospel starts (John 1:1) with a linguistic reflection back to Genesis 1:1 (*In the beginning*), so too does Mark's account (*The beginning*, Mark 1:1). This connection is reinforced by Mark's immediate reference to the Prophet Isaiah and omission of the genealogies and birth narratives of Matthew and Luke. Those of us who have heard the story before know of John the Baptizer as the forerunner of the Christ, but those versed in the Hebrew Scriptures would also that the prophets were messengers whose voices were raised in the spiritual wilderness calling the people to prepare for the coming of the Lord.

The "beginning" is more than a point or event in time. It is more like a reminder that we Christians are entering a continuing story that started in the heart of God and came to us through the people of Israel. *The story began without us, as a story of a particular way God is redeeming the world, a story that invites us to come forth and be saved by sharing in the work of a new people whom God has created in Israel and Jesus* (S. Hauerwas & W. Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, p.52).

**Dear God, in the beginning you created the heavens and the earth – recreate me today according to your will. Help me to see myself in your story and conform my life to your purpose. Give me the encouragement of knowing that I am not alone, but a member of your redeemed community. Amen.**