The theme of watchful anticipation continues during the Second Sunday of Advent, as we hear more of the joy and hope of the coming of our Lord in each of the readings. This joy and hope, however, does not come without its investment from God’s people. Isaiah proclaims in the first reading, “In the desert prepare the way of the Lord!” In this request to “make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God,” Isaiah calls for repentance in our own lives, as Paul writes to Peter in the second reading. This request reaches fulfillment in the beginning of Mark’s Gospel, which recounts the appearance of John the Baptist in the desert, calling people to repentance by water, with the joyful hope of the one after him, who will “baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”