

Third Sunday of Advent – Gaudete Sunday

“Gaudete” means **“be joyful”** in Latin. The tradition of this week includes lighting a third **pink candle**, a symbol of joy.

Let us reflect on the joy that God’s plan gives us - foretold by the prophets and fulfilled by the life and death of Jesus.

- ◇ Take some time to sit quietly, be alert and aware to reflect on the joy of Christmas approaching.
- ◇ Imagine you are talking to God face-to-face. Name 3 joys that are not ‘things’ – give thanks for your 3 joys.
- ◇ Over this Advent period, let us pray that the joy of our God might be evident in our hearts and homes. Write down how we can make this happen and keep these thoughts with you as the week progresses.

Scripture:

The readings this Sunday remind us of the *coming of Jesus* – past, present, and future – as the reason for our rejoicing.

First Reading: *Isaiah 61: 1-2a, 10-11*

Joy resounds in the reading from Isaiah: “I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul.”

Psalm: *Luke 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54*

Mary’s soul glorifies the Lord, finding joy in God her Saviour. Her song of praise echoes through the ages.

Second Reading: *1 Thess 5: 16-24*

Paul encourages us to “rejoice always.” We are to lead blameless, holy and thankful lives guided by the Holy Spirit, knowing that Christ is faithful to His promise of returning.

Gospel: *John 1: 6-8, 19-28*

John said to his questioners, “I baptise 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.”

What is our task? To try and point the way toward Jesus, like John was doing. We too are called to be Christ’s voice, his witnesses in the world. We too are called to proclaim him light to the world, the One who shows us God.
Remember: ours is meant to be a purpose-driven life.

Reflection:

- ◇ This week, to whom have I tried to point the way toward Jesus?
- ◇ This week, how have I been Christ’s voice, his witness in the world?

Prayer:

Lord,
the good news of Jesus’ arrival brings such joy to our world! Reach those who are lost and searching with the message of hope that we have through the Messiah. God, allow your message of peace to bring comfort to our anxious world. As we all go about the holiday season, let the message of great joy pierce through all the noise and into people's hearts.

Amen.

