

ADVENT 2009 - WEEK 3

Rejoice! The Lord is near yet we do not even know Him and think so very little of His ever presence in us.

PRESENCE OF GOD

Our God is already near. Therefore rejoice!

But even in the most faithful Christian, the happiness of the nearness of God does not always reign. Days and weeks may come, when we feel ourselves completely abandoned by God. Let us at such times look for Him, filled with Advent longing, and call out to Him: Yahweh, I know You are near, always at my side.

SCRIPTURE

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

Let Your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

HYMN: REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS

Rejoice in the Lord always

And again I say Rejoice

Rejoice in the Lord always

And again I say Rejoice

Rejoice, Rejoice

And again I say Rejoice

Rejoice in the Lord always

And again I say Rejoice

Rejoice in the Lord always

And again I say Rejoice

Rejoice, Rejoice

And again I say Rejoice

Rejoice, Rejoice

And again I say Rejoice

And again I say Rejoice

Rejoice, Rejoice

And again I say Rejoice



REFLECTION

The third Sunday of Advent presents the theme of Joy. It is the rejoicing that the Lord is coming and there is hope in the heart of every person that the Lord is close at hand. The first word of the entrance hymn today is "Rejoice!" And so this Sunday has come to be known as "Gaudete Sunday", from the Latin word Gaudete meaning "you rejoice". And why should we be rejoicing? Because we are soon to remember that the Son of God, Jesus the Christ, came to live among us as a human being and be one of us.

In advent we come to the amazing realization that God calls us like He called John the Baptist, to point to the messiah to every one around us. Advent theme expresses the complexity of the world, the yearning for the light, needing the straight path, waiting with eagerness and expectation for the author of goodness and life. We are then an advent people called by God to testify to the light. We have our share in the straightening of the path and lead people to the light, which is Jesus Christ.

PRAYERS of INTERCESSION

Brothers and sisters, as we joyfully await the glorious coming of the Christ, let us pray for the needs of the church, our community, and the world.

Response: LORD, HEAR YOUR PEOPLE

That we may always be people of thanksgiving with hearts filled with joy...

That the church and its pastors will lead us in hope and confidence as we journey to You, Lord...

That inspired with Your love and wisdom we will continually search out ways to better our community and world by working to eradicate poverty, injustice, disease and the other ills that plague us...

That we may always be open to the Spirit of God working in our hearts...

You enrich the poor. You strengthen what is weak and give hope to those who live in fear. Look upon our needs this day. Make us grateful for the Good News of Salvation and keep us faithful in Your service until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ Who lives for ever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER

O God of the exiles and the lost,

You promise restoration and wholeness through the power of Jesus Christ.

Give us faith to live joyfully, sustained by your promises

as we eagerly await the day when they will be fulfilled

for all the world to see, through the coming of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.



**O Key of David, Jesus Christ,
the gates of heaven open at Your command,
come and show us the way to salvation.**

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
fill us with the joy of knowing the Lord is with us.**

**Live Jesus in our hearts.
Forever!**