

Your Lourdes Sunday Liturgy at Home
3rd Sunday of Advent (Year B)
December 13, 2020

“I rejoice heartily in the LORD,
in my God is the joy of my soul...”
– – Isaiah 61:10

When all the graced visionaries have prophesied, when the healers have soothed every pain, when all the fettered are set free, when the naked and the shamed are clothed with justice and dignity (Isaiah), One will come among us — One in whom hope and healing, freedom and salvation will find their most eloquent expression (John). He is the One for whom we wait with joy (1 Thess).

On this, the third Sunday of Advent, Isaiah, Paul and the two Johns (the evangelist and the Baptizer) call the assembly to cultivate that joy and allow it to sustain us. Ours is good news.

Pope Francis is quite aware of all the evils that plague our planet. Nevertheless, he encourages believers to live and to preach the joy of the Gospel. In his exhortation of that name, Francis has admitted, “The great danger in today’s world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures and a blunted conscience” (“The Joy of the Gospel,” Nov 24, 2013). Those who follow Jesus need to evangelize in the face of this with a fierce and unrelenting joy; “an evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral!”

Pope Francis urges all to say “no” to selfishness and spiritual sloth. Let us not embrace what he calls “a tomb psychology that develops and slowly transforms Christians into mummies in a museum.” Rather, let us say “yes” to Christ, “yes” to God, “yes” to the Spirit and to all the new relationships brought out by Christ.

Let us embrace “the challenges of finding and sharing a mystique of living together, of mingling and encounter, of embracing and supporting one another, of stepping into this flood tide which,

while chaotic, can become a genuine experience of fraternity, a caravan of solidarity, a sacred pilgrimage. Greater possibilities for communication thus turn into greater possibilities for encounter and solidarity for everyone.

Sometimes, we are tempted to keep the Lord's wounds at arm's length. Jesus wants us to touch human misery, to touch the suffering flesh of others."

Jesus warns us against the security of isolation from human misfortune; "we are, instead, to enter into the reality of other people's lives and know the power of tenderness. Whenever we do so, our lives become wonderfully complicated and we experience intensely what it means to be a people, to be part of a people." All the while, let us be ambassadors of that authentic joy God alone can give and that God has given without measure in Jesus.

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Prelude: Center yourselves first by singing along with "Rejoice" (1984) Donald Vails Choraleers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juhdwb9k6Fc>

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you have been anointed to bring good news:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you are the cause of our rejoicing:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you come again to those who wait for you:

Lord, have mercy.

Opening Prayer

God of glory and compassion,
at your touch the wilderness blossoms,
broken lives are made whole,^{[L][SEP]}
and fearful hearts grow strong in faith.
Open our eyes to your presence,^{[L][SEP]}
and awaken our hearts to sing your praise.

To all who long for your Son's return
please grant perseverance and patience,^{[L][SEP]}
that we may announce in word and
deed the good news of the kingdom.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,^{[L][SEP]}
whose day draws near:^{[L][SEP]} your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,^{[L][SEP]}
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever. Let the church say – Amen.

Readings for Third Sunday of Advent, Year B December 13, 2020

1st Reading – Isaiah 61:1-2A, 10-11

¹ The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has
anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal
the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to
the prisoners,

^{2A} to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication
by our God.

¹⁰ I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for
he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a
mantle of justice,^{[L][SEP]} like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a
bride bedecked with her jewels.

¹¹ As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth
spring up, so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise spring up
before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord.....Thanks be to God.

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

R. (Isaiah 61:10b) My soul rejoices in my God.

46 My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;

47 my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;

48 for he has looked upon his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

49 the Almighty has done great things for me,

and holy is his Name.

50 He has mercy on those who fear him

in every generation.

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

53 He has filled the hungry with good things,

and the rich he has sent away empty.

54 He has come to the help of his servant Israel

for he has remembered his promise of mercy.

R. My soul rejoices in my God.

2nd Reading – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Brothers and sisters: Rejoice always.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

19 Do not quench the Spirit.

20 Do not despise prophetic utterances.

21 Test everything; retain what is good.

22 Refrain from every kind of evil.

23 May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

The Word of the Lord....Thanks be to God.

Gospel – John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶ A man named John was sent from God.

⁷ He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

⁸ He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

¹⁹ And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, “Who are you?”

²⁰ He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, “I am not the Christ.”

²¹ So they asked him, “What are you then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.”

²² 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?”

²³ 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.”

²⁴ Some Pharisees were also sent.

²⁵ They asked him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?”

²⁶ John answered them, “I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize,

²⁷ the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.”

²⁸ This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord.....Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection Prompts:

- In today’s Epistle, Paul advises the Thessalonians to
 - Rejoice always;
 - Pray without ceasing; and
 - In all circumstances give thanks....

Sound like a good plan to follow as we mask and physically distance ourselves to weather this pandemic.

- How can you follow this three-step process?
- What is your greatest cause for joy? How do you share this joy you

have with others?

Meditation Prompts:

Listen to “How I Got Over,” written by Clara Ward; sung by Aretha Franklin and the Southern California Community Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awi7J1hXNiE>

Then quietly mull these questions:

- John the Baptist says “He must increase; I must decrease” (in John 3:30). How are you allowing Jesus to increase in your life?
- John the Baptist was asked “who are you?” repeatedly by the elders. How would you answer that question about yourself? Would others say the same thing about you if they were asked?

Then move into this week’s prayers of the faithful.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS – December 13, 2020 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

Presider: My friends, Christ is the cause for our rejoicing. Our ancestors in faith waited for the day when at last the Messiah would come. We hold on in prayer just a little while longer until he comes again.

Worship Leader

1. For the church: that we its members embody joy and hope in the world. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.** (RESPOND: **Come, Lord Jesus.**)
2. For those who serve the poor and vulnerable directly, especially those caring for those suffering with the corona virus. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
3. For decision-makers at every level who have the power to promote justice, peace and hope for all who suffer. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
4. For the prophets among us whose voices challenge us and encourage us to hope. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

5. For our Jewish brothers and sisters who celebrate the festival of Hanukkah this week. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
6. For all those who are held captive by latter day enslavement, poverty, inequality, famine and war, that they be freed and their dignity restored. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
7. For commitments and actions to renew the face of the Earth with clean soil, water and air for the benefit of future generations. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
8. For long-term commitments by individuals and institutions to erase Racism and White Supremacy in American society. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
9. For an end to the Death Penalty around the nation, especially here in Georgia and at the federal level. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
10. For all those who are separated from us by infirmity, especially those listed in our bulletin, and for all those living with HIV and AIDS, that they know our community's care for them. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
11. For all the dead, that they see God face to face, especially Rita Engelhardt and Robert Howard Hickey for whom this Mass is being celebrated. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**
12. Please share any intention you have [PAUSE.....] as well as all our own needs. We pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Presider: Gracious God, you command us to prepare the way for Christ the Lord. Let our weakness never discourage us as we long for the comfort of his healing presence. We pray with joy in the name of the Anointed One. LET THE CHURCH SAY.....AMEN!

Sing or recite "The Lord's Prayer."

Then, behold "Oh Happy Day" by the Edwin Hawkins Singers:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfGDvDGE7zk>

Closing Prayer

Gracious God,
your people look forward in hope to the festival of our Saviour's birth.
Give us the strength to reach that happy day of salvation
and to celebrate it with hearts full of joy.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever. Let the Church say.....AMEN!

Closing Song

“Are You Ready?” by Rev. James Cleveland with the Metro Mass
Choir of the Gospel Music Workshop of America Chicago Chapter
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7O_OZF1gm0o