

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

YEAR C

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God,
you made us to care
for one another.
Let us never turn away from
people who are hungry and poor,
but share with them
the good things we enjoy.
We make this prayer to you
through Jesus Christ,
who lives with you
and the Holy Spirit,
forever and ever.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday, a day of joy. In our first reading, all fear, all sorrow, gives way to a song of joy at the wonderful thing God has done: "God has sent your enemies away." Zephaniah concludes with the tender assurance that God too rejoices in our salvation!

Again this Sunday, John the Baptist calls us to change our lives and live as people who have been saved. Each one who seeks the Lord is told to live justly according to his or her way of life. Throughout Advent, justice and peace are revealed as the signs of salvation. John points to the one who will come to baptize us in the Holy Spirit. It is this Spirit that enables us to live in justice and peace.

Shout for joy! The Savior brings justice and peace!

FIRST READING: *Zephaniah 3:14-17*

A reading from the prophet Zephaniah.

Shout for joy, O people of Jerusalem!
Sing with joy, people of Israel!
Be glad and sing with all your heart.
Be glad
because God has sent your enemies away!
Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged!
The Mighty Savior is with you
and will show God's love for you again.
And because of you,
God will dance and sing for joy,
just as we sing and dance at a celebration!

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: *Psalm 80*

1st time: Leader; 2nd time: All

God of glad-ness and joy, let your face shine on us. face shine on us.

Leader: Shine on us and we shall be saved. All: Shine on us and we shall be saved.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Change your lives, he's com-ing. The one who will bap-
tize with the Ho - ly Spir - it. Change your lives, he's
com-ing. The reign of God is near!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! "The reign of God is near."

*After Gospel, repeat Acclamation from here.

GOSPEL: *Luke 3:10-16*

A reading from the Gospel of Luke.

While John was baptizing in the Jordan River, many people came and asked him what they should do.

John said to them,

“Anyone who has two coats should give one to someone who hasn’t got a coat. Anyone who has food should share with people who are hungry.”

Tax collectors came to be baptized and they asked him,

“What must we do?”

John answered them,

“Don’t make people pay more taxes than they have to.”

Soldiers also asked him,

“What about us?”

He told them,

“Don’t bully people. Don’t lie about anyone. And be happy with the money you are paid.”

All the people were filled with excitement. They wondered if John might be the Messiah, the one they were waiting for.

But John said to them,

“There is one who will come later, who is mightier than I am. I am not even worthy to untie his sandal straps. I am baptizing with water, but he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

This Sunday we will invite the children to take the role of John the Baptist. Please see the *Reflections* for the first and second Sundays of Advent.

After the Gospel, you might suggest the following to the children:

Try to imagine that you are living somewhere where no one has ever heard about Jesus. No one is baptized; no one has ever heard about Mass or the Bible. You are the only person who knows about Jesus. If God asked you to tell the people about Jesus, what would you tell them about him? (Allow time for this.) If these people said they wanted to be disciples or followers of Jesus, how would you tell them to live? Would you have anything special to say to people like those listed below?

- store owners
- students in school
- children
- doctors
- rich people
- poor people
- (other groups)

These are merely examples to help the children begin. You may wish to suggest others.

