

Advent 2020

On the **Third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday**, we are invited to reflect on the **joy** we can feel because the birth of Jesus is near. Let's not allow the struggles of this year to steal from us the **great joy** we have because of Jesus. Joy, peace, grace and consolation can come, and perhaps most usually do come, in moments of quiet and thoughtfulness. Maybe this Gaudete Sunday, and this strange year, is beckoning us to quieten down, do less, be more prayerful, take intentional time to count our blessings and give thanks for the fundamental things. Maybe we can find room to rejoice when we won't be exhausted by constant parties, obligatory entertaining, harried travel, frenzied gift buying.

So ...

Begin by settling yourself into a chair. Turn off the TV, the mobile and...and

But have something ready to connect you to Youtube for the music!

Light a candle. Become aware of your breathing..... Breathe in the love of God and breathe out everything else.... and just relax and open your heart to God.....

Song: Joy to the World

*Joy to the World, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.*

*Joy to the World, the Saviour reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.*

Who or what brings you joy?



The 2nd reading from Thessalonians tells us to '**pray constantly**'.

Count, each day, the things for which you are grateful.

Call someone you love.

Be intentionally joyful.

My soul rejoices in the Lord because he has done great things for me – sings Mary in her Magnificat, the Psalm we use today.

And continues, **God raises the lowly**

Spend prayer time embracing the marginalized, those with little joy in their lives:

- Be with those seeking asylum at our border who have been turned away without a hearing or separated from their children.
- Pray with the poor, the victimized, the lonely, the ill, those in prison.

In the Gospel – John 1:6-8, we read,

‘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.’

Do you witness and let people know what brings light and joy to your life? How?

Song: Come my Lord, my light, my way

Keith Duke

Come my Lord, my light, my way;

Come my lantern, night and day;

Come my healer, make me whole;

Come my saviour, protect my soul;

Come my king, enter my heart;

Come Prince of Peace, and never depart.

Prayer:

Shining God,

even the darkness is not dark to you

shine in our darkness, light of our lives.

When we walk in the grey gloom of confusion

when pain drains all colour out of life

when we are paralysed by the darkness of fear

Shine in our darkness

When we know that others are walking in the darkness

give us courage to be light and joy for them.

The Iona Community

