



Fr. Prakash (Claretian)  
Rotorua Parish, New Zealand.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent Sunday

**Rejoice!!!**  
**The Light is Coming!**

**Gaudete Sunday**  
**(Gaudete = Rejoice)**

# Rejoice!



## The Entrance Antiphon

*Rejoice in the Lord always:  
again I say, rejoice! The  
Lord is near.*

*- Philippians 4:4-5*

**J : Jesus**

**O : Other**

**Y : You**

- A call to rejoice and be happy on account of a reality that has not yet come; the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ which we are awaiting.
- Rejoicing has always mixed with trials and tribulations in our lives yet each of us has an inherent desire for Joy.
- The Human heart is made for that experience. It means a lot only when we are in communion with living God.
- The source of all Joy is in Jesus first, second in other and thirdly in oneself.

# The Liturgy of The Word on Rejoice...

- In the First Reading (Isaiah 61:1-2a,10-11),
- Isaiah says, “I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul.”
- Psalm is the prayer of Mary The Magnificat taken from Luke.
- In the Second Reading (1Thess. 5:16-24),
- St. Paul tells his listeners to rejoice always with prayers and thanksgiving in all circumstances.
- In the Gospel of John (John 1:6-8, 19-28),
- The writer uses the image of light to describe the testimony of John the Baptist about the coming of the Messiah.
- John says, “I am not the light, but he came to testify to the light, and that is Jesus Christ.”



# The Image of Light in a Biblical Point of view.



1. God started the creation of the world, the first facility He provided was light: “and God said, let there be light, and there was light” (Gen.1:3). Light, in the form of fire, often heralds the presence of God.
  2. Moses encountered God by the burning bush (Exo 3:2).
  3. God marched with the people of Israel through the desert by the pillar of fire at night to give them light (Exodus 13:21-22).
  4. David tells us the word of God is his light and salvation (Psalm 27:1).
  5. The prophecy of Isaiah concerning the Messiah indicates that those living in darkness would see a great light (Isaiah 9:2).
  6. Saul encountered our Lord Jesus Christ on his way to Damascus through a great light (Acts 9:3).
  7. Peter tell us that God called us out of darkness into his marvelous light (1Pet. 2:9b)
- The image of light promises joy to those who are sitting in the sad corners of darkness.



# What is Joy?



- Joy is an act of faith.
- It is a facility of the Spirit (Gal.5:22).
- When the Holy Spirit comes, the Joy is shared and given away to other people.
- In response to Elizabeth's greetings, the Blessed Virgin Mary said my soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior (Luke 1:46-47).
- In the Gospel of Luke (10:21), we read that Jesus rejoiced in the spirit and praised the Father.
- Joy is not the opposite of sadness.
- It is the opposite of pleasure; pleasure is self-seeking, about me, my feeling etc. But joy is something that bubbles out of us. it's something that's contagious to share.
- We are called to be contagious in sharing the joy of our God to others.

## **Three Steps Plan to achieve Joy in our Hearts. By St. Paul from today's Second reading...**

### **1. Pray without ceasing...**

Many of us struggle in life due to lack of prayer. Sometimes we pray a lot, but we fail to listen to Him through the scriptures and put in to practice.

### **2. In all circumstances give Thanks...**

The Eucharist is the one of the greatest means to give thanks for every gift that we have received by God. In good times and bad times.

### **3. Retain what is good and refrain from every kind of evil.**

A simple call for moral life.



# We Deserve Joy in life



- People often talk about natural and fundamental human rights like the right to life, property, and liberty.
- There are rights in the spiritual plane, and one of them is the right to be joyful. You deserve joy in your life. And nothing and nobody has the right to take away your joy.
- There are many joy killers in and around us. For brevity, we shall look at a few of them in this reflection.



# Joy Killers in life...



## 1. Our Past.

It is gone! Often, we get fixated about the past that we lose the joy we can get from the present time. Snap out of your past and own your joy now. The prophet Isaiah (43:18) says, do not remember the former things or consider old things.

## 2. Our attention to what people say and how they feel about us.

One truth you need to know and accept is that you cannot please everybody; do not even try. You often must displease people to please God to have your joy coming.

## 2. Our consistent worrying.

Some people worry about nearly everything on earth. But worrying would never change anything; rather, it would complicate issues. The worst form of worrying happens when we imagine and worry about things that would never exist. Allow God to take handle those worrisome situations. Matthew (6:34)





## **Dear Brothers and Sisters, Own and Keep Your Joy...**

- Joy is not a choice; it is the consequence of our choices about things we allow or let go of our lives.
- Own and keep your joy and remember, as the Nehemiah (8:10) advised the people, the joy of the Lord is your strength.
- It is about time you need to rebuild your walls of joy in your life; you deserve it. God bless you and have a blessed week ahead.



## Two wonderful Characters to Reflect in this Weekend...

### 1. John the Baptist

- He came as a witness.
- As a witness to speak for the Light.
- He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the Light.
- He never counted equality with Jesus.
- We are called to be like a Great messengers of Christ with Humility.



## 2. Our Lady of Guadalupe

- This is a powerful image and right in the center of the image, she has a cincture in a black color.
- **Black cincture means that she is pregnant.**
- The heart of the image of our lady of Guadalupe is a woman, Mary preparing for the coming of her son Jesus Christ.
- **Jesus is the center of this image of our lady of Guadalupe.**
- In those days, If a woman walked around the village with a black cincture, the whole village protect her and get ready for the coming of that baby.
- **During this Advent season, we are Catholics are called to do the same... be prepared and be ready for coming of Jesus Christ in your life.**

