

## 3rd Sunday of Advent, Year A Rejoicing Sunday

Today Matthew puts the question into the mouth of John ...

**ARE YOU THE ONE ...OR SHOULD WE WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE?** John the Baptist is imprisoned on account of Herod's malice. So now who's supposed to prepare the way for the arrival of the Messiah? "**Are you the awaited Messiah?**" they ask him anxiously. Because all hope is founded on the One who can save us from evil, strengthen us in our struggle, found a new people. Jesus' answer is a guarantee that God fulfils his promises: "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are made clean. "For the Christian Church, John's question has been answered. **JESUS IS THE ONE..... THERE IS NO NEED TO WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE!** As Peter has said in the bulletin in our common message this weekend.

Christ Is the Source of True Joy

We just heard the word "**joy**", in one form another, **six times**.

Do you think God is trying to tell us something?

We have put away our **dark** vestments today; we have **traded** our purple and midnight blue vestments for **rose vestments**.

Do you think the Church is trying to tell us something?

The **dark night** in which the world **waited helplessly** for its Saviour is **coming to an end**; Christmas is drawing **closer**; Christ will soon be born.

Christ himself is the **sun** that lights up the **dark night sky**, and he is **drawing near**; the horizon is beginning to glow with a pale, **rose-coloured** light.

The rose vestments are a **visual echo** of the **words** of the First Reading, which **called us to rejoice**.

Today is "Gaudete" Sunday, the Sunday of **Rejoicing**.

Advent announces to us the coming of our Lord, so we are filled with joy. Today's Mass starts with the word "Laetare!" **"Rejoice because the Lord is near!"**

We do not rejoice because we believe Jesus came to bring **heaven down to earth**.

Rather, we rejoice because we know that Jesus came to **open a path from earth into heaven**.

The joy of the Christian is the joy of a **hope** guaranteed by **God himself**. This is **true** joy, the joy of **hope**, and **Christ is its source**.

Everything in today's Mass speaks of hope, "Courage, be not afraid!" **The Child to be born in Bethlehem will bring us salvation**.

**The witness of good Christians** can change the world with patience and convert many hearts without any need of violence. But many might be asking: if Christ, who was the true Messiah, couldn't change the world, then how am I supposed to make it better? We find the answer in today's Gospel: by proclaiming the good news of salvation in my own life. In other words, helping cure the sick, accompanying and consoling those who suffer loneliness and abandonment, teaching the truth to those who are blinded by vice and ideology - in that way Christ will be the one acting through me, fulfilling his promise of salvation. In our parish we are doing many things to announce to all the good news of the gospel.

**Jesus is the start of a new world**. What seems impossible to men will be a reality if our homes become a community where we can believe, hope and love. Where everyone finds new energy to live. We are the continuation of those communities that were springing up around Jesus' time two thousand years ago. May this Eucharistic celebration help us trust and believe in this salvation. Finally let us pray with Mary, Mother of Advent...

Hail, O Lady,  
Holy Queen,  
Mary, holy Mother of God,  
Who are the Virgin made Church,  
chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven  
whom he consecrated with His most holy beloved Son  
and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,  
in whom there was and is  
all fullness of grace and every good.

Hail His Palace!  
Hail His Tabernacle!  
Hail His Dwelling!  
Hail His Robe!  
Hail His Servant!  
Hail His Mother!

And hail all You holy virtues  
which are poured into the hearts of the faithful  
through the grace and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit,  
that from being unbelievers,  
You may make them faithful to God.

AMEN.

*Fr Luis Herrera  
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