

# Inspire

ST JAMES & ST BONIFACE,  
MID DEVON PARISH,  
NR\_7\_12-12-21



## THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

The first Reading of Mass is an invitation to joy. The Prophet Zephaniah at the end of the 7th century B.C. spoke to the city of Jerusalem and its people with these words: "Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem...! The Lord your God is in your midst"

As in the times of the Prophet Zephaniah, it is particularly to those being tested and to "life's wounded and orphans of joy" that God's Word is being addressed in a special way. To transform the world, God chose a humble young girl from a village in Galilee, Mary of Nazareth, and challenged her with this greeting: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you." In these words lies the secret of an authentic Christmas. God repeats them to the Church, to each one of us: Rejoice, the Lord is close! **(Pope Benedict XVI)**

**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed the Lord is near.** With these words from the Entrance Antiphon the **Third Sunday of Advent - Gaudete Sunday** begins.

**The Prophet Zephaniah's** announces the liberation and God's presence among the people after decades of their own infidelity. In **Luke's Gospel**, John the Baptist is the focus of the expectation in the people who come to him asking what to do. He exhorts them to integrity and charity and announces the one who is to come: "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Monday is the **Memorial of Saint Lucy** and Tuesday is the **Memorial of John of the Cross**.

Friday sees the beginning of the **O Antiphons**. Also known as the **Great Advent Antiphons** or **Great Os**)

They are the Magnificat antiphons used at vespers on the last seven days of Advent in Western Christian traditions. They likely date to sixth-century Italy, when Boethius refers to the text in *The Consolation of Philosophy*. They subsequently became one of the key musical features of the days leading up to Christmas. The texts are best known in the English-speaking world in their paraphrased form in the hymn 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel'.

## DAILY PRAYER THIS WEEK

Our week begins with "Gaudete Sunday." Gaudete means "rejoice" in Latin. It comes from the first word of the Entrance antiphon on Sunday. The spirit of joy that begins this week comes from the words of Paul, "The Lord is near." This joyful spirit is marked by the third candle of our Advent wreath, which is rose coloured, and the rose-coloured vestments often used at the Eucharist.

Preparing our Hearts and asking for Grace  
We prepare this week by feeling the joy. We move through this week feeling a part of the waiting world that rejoices because our longing has prepared us to believe the reign of God is close at hand.

Prepare our hearts and remove the sadness that hinders us from feeling the joy and hope which his presence will bestow. "Come, Lord Jesus. Come and visit your people. We await your coming. Come, O Lord.

## CONTEMPLATION

A time for Being content

Sometimes it is hard to:  
count our blessings, look on the bright side of life, believe that every cloud has a silver lining.

Being glad to be alive, being grateful for what is, being aware of Good News, can lead to ~  
**Being content...**

Remember:



**"The Lord your God is in your midst  
... and will exult with joy over you  
Renewing you in LOVE."**

Zephaniah Ch 3 v 14-18

"Happiness is" ...a gift I often search for in things, in places, in relationships. Perhaps I need to look nearer home, within myself, deep down in my heart, **where God is, exulting with joy over me, renewing me in LOVE.**

Am I content to be the person God created me to be ... ? St Paul tells us to

**"Be happy, always happy in the Lord. And may our tolerance be evident to everyone..."**

**May the peace of God,  
which is so much greater  
than we can understand,  
guard our hearts and our thoughts  
in Christ Jesus"**

Philippians Ch 4 v 4- 7

John the Baptist tells us: **"Be content with what you have"**

He encourages us to look at what we have rather than what we do not have ~

We can also see ourselves  
in relation to others, richer ~  
or poorer.

*He sees himself in relation to Jesus:*

**"I am not worthy  
to undo the strap of his sandal."**

Luke Ch 3 v 10-12

In this third week let us pray:

We thank you Lord,  
our God, for all the  
joy and gladness  
we can see in our  
lives .....

Come, and be with  
us in our daily  
struggles

so that we may know your loving care .....

May we continue to recognise that peace which  
only you can give,

and which surpasses all understanding .....

We ask this in the name of Jesus, Prince of  
Peace. Amen.



Words by Sister Bernadette Arscott

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### THE CALL

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life;  
Such a Way, as gives us breath:  
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:  
Such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength:  
Such a Light, as shows a feast:  
Such a Feast, as mends in length:  
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:  
Such a Joy, as none can move:  
Such a Love, as none can part:  
Such a Heart, as joys in Love.

George Herbert

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### HEAVEN

A guy had a dream he had gone to heaven and saw many clocks. As is customary with these stories St Peter is attending the gate. When asked what the clocks were for Peter replied that every person on earth has a clock here, and each time one sins, the hand on their clock moves just a bit. The man said, "Where is my clock?" Peter replied, "It is in the office, Moses has been using it for a fan."

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**GAUDETE - "REJOICE"**