

FR RUDY'S REFLECTION
The Third Sunday of Advent
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025

Rejoice, for the Lord Is Near



Fr. Rudy Coaquira-Hijale,
MCCJ, pastor

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

Today we celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent, known as Gaudete Sunday. The word *Gaudete* is Latin for *Rejoice*, and this theme fills our liturgy with anticipation and gladness. We light a rose-colored candle on the Advent wreath and our celebrants wear vestments of the same joyful shade. These signs remind us that even in a season of waiting and preparation, there is great joy in knowing that the coming of Christ is near.

This joy is not a shallow or fleeting form of happiness. It is rooted deeply in the love and promise of God. American devotional writer Samuel Dickey Gordon once wrote that happiness depends on external circumstances that may change in an instant, while true Christian joy comes from Christ dwelling within us. Joy, he says, continues to sing its quiet song even in the shadow of the cross. That is the type of joy Advent invites us to rediscover. In two short weeks, we will celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord, the moment when divine love broke into the world as a child. And we also look forward to Christ's return in glory, when every tear will be wiped away.

Our Gospel today from Matthew 11 draws us into a moment of honest questioning. John the Baptist, now imprisoned by Herod, sends his disciples to Jesus with a direct inquiry: "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" It

may seem surprising that the very prophet who pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God would raise such a question. Yet Scripture gives us this powerful scene, not to undermine John's faith, but to illuminate what it looks like to seek reassurance while enduring suffering.

Jesus responds not with frustration but with evidence of God's saving work: "Go and tell John what you hear and see." The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Good News proclaimed to them. Jesus invites John and his disciples to recognize the fulfillment of ancient prophecies unfolding before their eyes. He encourages trust in the midst of uncertainty.

We too may find ourselves in prisons of fear, disappointment, or grief. We may look at the state of the world or at our own trials and wonder whether God is truly present. In those moments, Jesus offers us the same reassurance. He urges us to look for signs of grace that are all around us. He calls us to trust that God is working even when we do not see the full picture.

Gaudete Sunday reminds us that joy does not ignore life's difficulties. Instead, it proclaims that Christ has stepped into our world, and nothing can take away the hope he brings. **Saint John Bosco once said, "God will provide." In every age, those words hold true. Let us hold fast to that promise with joyful hearts.**

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Rudy

Rejoice!

OUR LADY
OF GUADALUPE
FAMILY OF PARISHES



HOLY FAMILY CHURCH
ST. BONIFACE CHURCH
ST. JOSEPH CHURCH
ST. LEO THE GREAT
CHURCH
ST. THÉRÈSE LITTLE
FLOWER CHURCH