



ADVENT 3

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December 13, 2020
Anglican Parish of Raymond Terrace
www.stjohnsraymondterrace.org

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Pray:

May I speak to you in the name of GOD – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen



The season of Advent, traditionally associated with the coming of the King, is also seen as a season of penitence in preparation. But into that time of penitence shines the shaft of light that promised that the darkness was ending and the light coming. That naturally gives rise to a sense of joy, and today is often known as Gaudete Sunday – from the Latin word meaning “to rejoice”. The source of that joy is evident. Darkness depresses and in winter – at least in some latitudes, people long for the longer, brighter, warmer days.

The exiles described in Psalm 126 rejoiced because the night of their exile was over. Isaiah 61 looks forward to a day when sadness will be replaced by joy and praise because GOD has come.

Paul encourages the Thessalonians to live in a way that is marked by joy.

The message of John, therefore, as he points to the light, is a source of joy to all those who listen. We know the end of the story, which ought to make us even more joyful. But it is worth trying to capture the sense of anticipation which the Jewish nation felt and which, for some at least, rose to fever pitch when John arrived. JESUS is coming, the light is shining, and the darkness with all that it brings by way of fear and doubt is about to be dispelled. John offered the hope of light. JESUS is the light.



In our Gospel reading for today, 4 key aspects of John's ministry are highlighted. John is pointing towards:

1. **^A Reformed People** – in John 1:23 it is made clear that John's role was to make straight the way for the LORD. He taught people how to behave, how to sort out their lives and how to straighten their crooked paths. What this involves is explicit

in Luke 3:¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' ¹¹In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' ¹²Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' ¹³He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation; and be satisfied with your wages.'

2. **^A Baptised People** – John's role was to baptise people as a symbol of clean lives, the washing away of sin, and of becoming members of a new Israel – as is made clear in John 1: ²⁶John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Just as GOD's first people (Israel) had passed through the waters of the Red Sea, this symbolic action of

baptism in the Jordan implies that GOD's new people (a new Israel) pass through water again

3. **^A New People** – in John's Gospel we read that John the Baptist baptised on the other side of the Jordan – on the east bank in Gentile territory. John 1:28 says: ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. Most Jews travelling from Judea to Galilee would avoid Samaria. In order to do this, they went to the Jordan valley and walked up the eastern bank opposite the Samaritan western bank. Here travellers would be plentiful, and John would meet many people. Thus, there is a NEW PEOPLE – including non-Jews.
4. **^A Humble People** – John makes clear his own humility. In John 1: ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal. This is a great statement of humility because

untying the sandal thongs was a slave's task. John does not consider himself worthy even for this.

John's signpost was pointing towards a reformed, a baptised, a new and a humble people. With the arrival of JESUS, it is clear towards whom John had been pointing.

1. JESUS teaches that people need to be reformed. The Sermon on the Mount talks of a radical reformation – not just actions but thoughts are to be examined. ^
2. JESUS teaches the importance of baptism. Matthew 28: ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. There is no evidence that JESUS actually baptised anyone. Baptism is an act of cleansing and membership. ^
3. John had indicated that GOD's plan would include non-Jewish people and ministry in non-Jewish

lands. JESUS' ministry did the same. He visited non-Jewish places and met and healed non-Jews.

^

4. Just as John taught humility so did JESUS. JESUS' birth and his coming in human form are part of that message and also His washing of the disciples' feet. ^

So, John was the signpost pointing to JESUS. He is the royal herald preparing the way for his King. He is the messenger and JESUS is the message. He talks of CHRIST: JESUS is the CHRIST.



The third Sunday of Advent is also called Gaudete Sunday. During the season of Advent, we await the celebration of Christ's birth and His coming again at the end of time. Over four weeks, we prepare our hearts for Christmas in penitential reflection. But in the middle of the season, Gaudete Sunday calls us to rejoice in hope! What does Gaudete mean?

Gaudete means “rejoice” in Latin.

Gaudete – said “Gow-DAY-tay” – Sunday reminds us that the gift has not yet arrived, but it’s very near. It takes its name from the Latin for the introduction of Philippians 4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord always.”

May we pray:

GOD of all ages and every nation, you awaken in our hearts a desire for mercy and you bring light to the darkness of the world. May the advent of your Son dispel the darkness and refresh our conviction to live with a deeper faith in His love. This we pray in the name of JESUS. Amen

Life Application Study Bible

Daily Prayer 2020

[Turning Pink With Joy on Gaudete Sunday – CatholicVote.org](#) Date

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