

Fr. Martin's Reflection – December 12, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to the third Sunday of Advent. You will notice the color of the vestments worn at mass this weekend is a lighter color than the normal violet – the color is a combination of violet and white, which gives us this rose color. Our first two weeks of Advent was a period of penitential preparation for the coming of the Lord. The next two Sundays are 'Gaudéte – Rejoice' and 'Laetáre, Ierúsalem – be joyful Jerusalem'.

As we reach week three and four, are we ready to 'Rejoice' and be 'Joyful' for the coming of the Lord, or are we battling with the secular world? Putting up the last Christmas decoration, or sending the last Christmas card, or getting that last Christmas present? Or maybe you are hosting Christmas dinner and running about making sure you have enough food and drink to keep everybody happy. If it's your first Christmas hosting it can all seem so overwhelming, and you wish it was all over.

Christ's coming into this world was not to overwhelm us or become a food critic; Christ's coming into our world 2000 years ago and today is to relay to us God's love and desire for us. The gift God wishes to receive from us is the gift his son brought to us, **Faith, Hope and Love**. The gift God wishes for us to give to our family and friends doesn't have a monetary cost – God wants us to share the same gift we received – **Faith, Hope and Love, and greatest of these is Love!**

Our readings are particularly beautiful this week, but I want to leave you with the reading from the Prophet Zephaniah 3:14-18a:

"Shout for joy, O daughter Zion!

Sing joyfully, O Israel!

Be glad and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

The Lord has removed the judgment against you, he has turned away your enemies;

the King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst, you have no further misfortune to fear.

On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem: Fear not, O Zion, be not discouraged!

The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior; he will rejoice over you with gladness, and renew you in his love, he will sing joyfully because of you, as one sings at festivals.

Rejoice and be joyful, your Lord is coming.

Fr. Martin