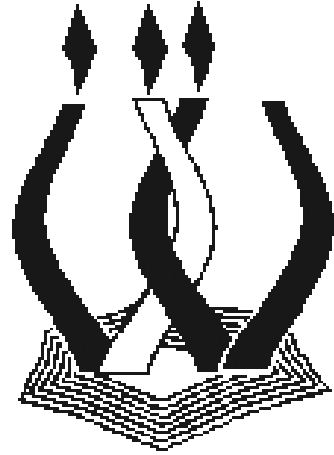


CELEBRATING WEEK THREE of ADVENT

**We remember the hope.
We remember the promise.
We rejoice that the salvation
we hope for is coming to us.**

**St. Paul invites us to live in
the City of God,
where grace abounds:
May the peace of God
which surpasses all
understanding guard your
hearts and your minds in Christ
Jesus, our Lord.
Rejoice always for the Lord is near.**

-Philippians 4: 7



Light the first three candles on the Advent wreath.

**As we hope and rejoice in the Lord, we remember His presence among us
and prepare again for His coming.**

O Lord, we are the people who long to see Your face.

Christ Our Joy Isaiah 35

**The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.
Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.
they will see the glory of the Lord,
the splendor of our God.**

**Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
say to those with fearful hearts,
“Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
He will come with vengeance;
with divine retribution
He will come to save you.”**

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.
Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.
The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.
In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.
And a highway will be there;
it will be called the Way of Holiness.
The unclean will not journey on it;
it will be for those who walk in that Way;
wicked fools will not go about on it.
No lion will be there,
nor will any ferocious beast get up on it;
they will not be found there.
But only the redeemed will walk there.

Response

Lord Jesus, You tell us to stay awake and pray
because we not neither the day nor the hour.
May each day find us more ready to welcome You into our lives,
and may the last of our days be the happiest
because we will then return home
and discover the place that You have prepared for us.

Reflection

Look to the coming of the Lord, “prepare the way of the Lord”, as does John, humbly proclaiming, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (Jn 1:29) This phrase, in the Latin, “*Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi,*” has been handed down in the sacred liturgy, proclaimed by the priest while holding up the sacred Host, the Body and Blood of Christ. John the Baptist, man of holy humility and bold proclamation, demands that we turn our eyes to Christ, Who “takes away the sin of the world.” Wholehearted desire for Christ begins with honest acknowledgment of our sinfulness and the sin of the world around us.

In Advent John the Baptist guides us, a people who look to Christ alone to take away our sins and to open heaven for us when He comes again in glory. Christ is the “Lamb of God”, to Whom we confidently go to receive the fullness of God’s mercy. *Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi.* Wait humbly, and with a sense of urgency, to receive Him Who unburdens us of the weight of death and shame of sin and gives us in exchange His unending divine life.

Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Let the day come, Lord, when our misery will find Your mercy.

Let the day come, Lord, when our poverty will find your riches.

Let the day come, Lord, when our path will find the way to Your house.

Let the day come, Lord, when our tears will find Your smile.

Let the day come, Lord, when our joy will find Your heaven.

Let the day come, Lord, when the Church will find Your Kingdom.

May You be blessed, Father, for that day when our eyes will find Your face.

Throughout all the time in our life You have not ceased to come before us in Your Christ, our Savior and Brother. Amen.

– Lucien Deiss, Come Lord Jesus

Reflective Questions for the third week of Advent:

What most brings me spiritual joy?

How do I live a life of rejoicing in the coming of the Lord?

In what ways do I realize that I need to make my rough road straight?

How do I prepare each day to meet the Lord?

What can I do concretely to ward off spiritual sloth or indifference in my life?

Hymn

**Blessed are You, God of all creation,
and blessed is the communion
into which You gather us.**

**Your Word is conceived within us,
and we grow heavy with hope,
eagerly awaiting the day when all creation
will be delivered into Your glorious freedom.**

**Send Your Holy Spirit
to call us by name and lead us home.**

**The prophets crying in the wilderness awaken us
with their holy anger and passionate hope.
Come, Lord Jesus, bring the day of justice to birth.**

**Send Your Holy Spirit
to call us by name and lead us home.**

**As the shadows shrink and the sun begins to bite,
we anticipate Your coming with joy and fear.
Come, Lord Jesus, give us the courage to yield
to the purifying fire of Your love, raging towards us.**

**Send Your Holy Spirit
to call us by name and lead us home.**

Let us pray

**Lord, may You Yourself prepare in the wilderness of our hearts the path of
Your return.**

The hills of our pride, tear them down with Your humility.

The valleys of our despair, fill them with Your hope.

**The winding roads of our lives, straighten them with Your truth,
and let bloom in our desert the daffodils of Your joy.**

Then we will be able to see Your glory and share Your presence. Amen.



Blessing

**Expectant, let us live in joyful hope
for the revelation of the glory
of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus!
To Him be glory forever!**

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
help us to walk as children of light to the Coming Dawn.**

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!