



GAUDETE SUNDAY

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



Here we are on the 3rd Sunday of Advent when the rose or pink candle is lit on the Advent wreath. You will notice the 3rd banner has been hung in the sanctuary with the word JOY on it. This reflects the name of this day, known as Gaudete Sunday, which means simply to REJOICE. The priest and deacon also don their rose-colored vestments for the weekend Masses.

This week provides a break midway through the season and signifies the nearness of the Lord's coming at Christmas. While the season of Advent has us focusing on the coming of Jesus in three ways - His first, His present and His final one - Gaudete Sunday focuses on rejoicing in the Lord. Even the Holy Father tells us it is the SUNDAY OF JOY. That should be our focus and not on all we still have not done for Christmas. He also added that we should think about all the good things life has given us. This is great advice to embrace.

A Prayer of Rejoicing

Heavenly Father, this third week of Advent, let us remember that the good news of Jesus' birth brings us great joy this Christmas season. Our joy is not dependent on what is going on in our lives, in our world, or the people that we are with. It does not depend on the gifts we give or the gifts we find under the tree. No earthly thing can ever give us complete joy. Our joy comes from you. That joy that flooded the hearts of the shepherds, the angels, the wise men, the hosts of heaven, and Mary and Joseph is the joy that still has the power to overwhelm our hearts with rejoicing. Flood our hearts with joy this Advent season as we reflect on the good news of Jesus' birth. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



Advent Wreath Weekly Prayer & Blessing for Your Home

This year, why not give some meaning to your Advent wreath to deepen your family's understanding and appreciation for this beautiful Advent season? Set aside a time when the family is together to pray and light the candle for the appropriate week. It is a wonderful way to engage in something prayerful with those you love.

Third Week of Advent: December 15, 2024

Light two purple candles and the pink candle.

Pray: *Dear Jesus, help us focus on you during the busy season. May we stay aware of the joy you bring into our lives. We want to find you in the everyday moments and come with our hearts of gratitude to your manger on Christmas. Amen.*