



13 December 2015

3rd Sunday of Advent

Year C

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING SUNDAY

# ADVENT: A TIME TO REJOICE IN THE LORD

Today the liturgy repeatedly invites us to rejoice. Although we have many reasons to be sad because of so much suffering, violence, and hatred throughout the world, both the prophet Zephaniah and the apostle Paul tell us that the reasons to rejoice are even greater. In all these trials we are not on our own: **THE LORD IS NEAR!** He is near as a mighty savior, as a loving brother who comes to share our burden of sorrows in order to make us share in his inheritance of eternal happiness.



In response to this heart-warming message, we are expected to do our part. Following the invitation of John the Baptist, this means we have to be generous to our needy neighbor, to be fair in our dealings with others, and to be instruments of God's loving care for all.

Today, the second Sunday of December, we also celebrate Anti-Human Trafficking Sunday. In our world, modern forms of slavery exist, putting men, women, and children in oppressive situations of forced labor and sexual exploitation. We offer all Masses in the Philippines today for all victims, as we pray and work for an end to human trafficking.

## INTRODUCTORY RITES



### Entrance Antiphon

*(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)*

**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.**

### Greeting

**P** –Blessed be the Lord, the cause of our joy. May his grace and peace be with you all!  
**All**–And with your spirit!

### Penitential Act

**P** –As we prepare to celebrate the sacred mysteries on this third Sunday of Advent, let us call to mind our sins. *(Pause)*

**P** –Lord Jesus, you came to bring glad tidings to those afflicted by suffering and fear. Lord, have mercy!

**All**–Lord, have mercy!

**P** –Lord Jesus, you came to heal the broken-hearted. Christ, have mercy!

**All**–Christ, have mercy!

**P** –Lord Jesus, you came to proclaim liberty to those who are slaves of sin. Lord, have mercy!

**All**–Lord, have mercy!

**P** –May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.  
**All**–Amen!

### Collect (Opening Prayer)

**P** –O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of

the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**All**–Amen!

## LITURGY OF THE WORD



**1st Reading** *Zep 3:14-18*

*The certainty of the Lord's saving intervention was so great that the prophets often presented it using the past tense. Today's poetic passage from Zephaniah is a concrete example of this optimistic faith as he addresses his message of hope to Jerusalem and us.*

**R** –A proclamation from the Book of the Prophet Zephaniah

**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."

The Word of the Lord!

All—Thanks be to God!

Responsorial Psalm *Is 12*

R —Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the Great and Holy One of Israel!

R. M. Velez

Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the Great and Holy One of Israel!

\* God indeed is my savior; I am confident and unafraid. My strength and my courage is the Lord. He has been my savior. With joy you will draw water at the fountain of salvation. R.

\* Give thanks to the Lord, acclaim his name; among the nations make known his deeds, proclaim how exalted is his name. R.

\* Sing praise to the Lord for his glorious achievement; let this be known throughout all the earth. Shout with exultation, O city of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel! R.

2nd Reading *Phil 4:4-7*

The approaching of the celebration of the Christmas event should fill us with explosive and contagious joy. In today's passage, St. Paul's exhortation to the Christians of Philippi is most appropriate for us, too.

R —A proclamation from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians

Brothers and sisters:

Rejoice in the Lord always.

I shall say it again: rejoice!

Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord!

All—Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation *Is 61:1*

All—Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel *Lk 3:10-18*

In today's Gospel passage we hear for the first time John the Baptist himself. His preaching includes the concrete demands of a sincere conversion, which today are addressed to all of us.

P —The Lord be with you!

All—And with your spirit!

P —A proclamation from the holy Gospel according to Luke

All—Glory to you, O Lord!

The crowds asked John the Baptist, "What should we do?" He said to them in reply, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise."

Even tax collectors came to be baptized and they said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He answered them, "Stop collecting more than what is prescribed."

Soldiers also asked him, "And what is it that we should do?" He told them, "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages."

Now the people were filled

with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ. John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Exhorting them in many other ways, he preached good news to the people.

The Gospel of the Lord!

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

## Homily

### Profession of Faith

(Nicene Creed)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow)\* and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.\* For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the

forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen!

### Prayer of the Faithful

**P** –Guided by the preaching of John the Baptist, we realize ever more clearly the need for conversion and our weakness in bringing it about. Let us ask God’s help, praying with confidence:

**All**—**Lord, give us a new heart!**

**C** –For the Universal Church and her leaders: May they passionately pursue in our time the mission of John to call people to conversion. Let us pray! **R.**

**C** –For those who are tempted to seek happiness away from the Lord: May they remember that only in doing God’s will is there lasting joy and freedom. Let us pray! **R.**

**C** –For all victims of human trafficking: May they find hope and inspiration in the life of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was also a victim like them but found healing and new life in Jesus. Let us pray! **R.**

**C** –For the leaders of our country and the world: May they make serious efforts to bring to justice all human traffickers and put an end to this modern-day slavery. Let us pray! **R.**

**C** –For those in Media and Advertising: In a world increasingly obsessed with sex and violence, may they realize the influence they have on people’s minds and be the first to respect and uphold the dignity of men, women, and children. Let us pray! **R.**

**C** –For all of us: As Pope Francis has pleaded, may we not “look the other way” and instead care and do our share in fighting human trafficking and all forms of exploitation and abuse. Let us pray! **R.**

**C** –Let us pray in silence for our personal intentions. (*Pause*)  
Let us pray! **R.**

**P** –God of light, grant that our behavior be always in accordance with the Gospel of life we profess, and a witness to Jesus,

the source of our joy, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**All**—**Amen!**

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### Preparation of the Gifts

**P** –Pray, brethren . . .

**All**—**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

### Prayer over the Offerings

**P** –May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, be complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All**—**Amen!**

### Preface of Advent II

**P** –The Lord be with you!

**All**—**And with your spirit!**

**P** –Lift up your hearts!

**All**—**We lift them up to the Lord!**

**P** –Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

**All**—**It is right and just!**

**P** –It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For all the oracles of the prophets foretold him, the Virgin Mother longed for him with love beyond all telling, John the Baptist sang of his coming and proclaimed his presence when he came.

It is by his gift that already we rejoice at the mystery of his Nativity, so that he may find us watchful in prayer and exultant in his praise.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

**All**—**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in**

**the highest!**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

### Memorial Acclamation

**P** –The mystery of faith!

**All**—**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again!**

## COMMUNION RITE

**All**—**Our Father . . .**

**P** –Deliver us, Lord . . .

**All**—**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.**

### Sign of Peace

### Breaking of the Bread

**All**—**Lamb of God . . .**

### Communion

**P** –Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**All**—**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

### Communion Antiphon

(*To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.*)

**Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.**

### Prayer after Communion

**P** –We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All**—**Amen!**

(*Please pray the Prayer to End Human Trafficking*)

## CONCLUDING RITES

**P** –The Lord be with you!

**All**—**And with your spirit!**

**P** –Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing. (*Pause*) You rejoice at the approaching commemoration of Christ’s birth. When he comes again in glory, may he reward you with endless life.

**All–Amen!**

**P** –May God make you stead-

fast in faith, joyful in hope, and untiring in love all the days of your life.

**All–Amen!**

**P** –May the coming of God’s Son bring you the light of his holiness and the power of his grace.

**All–Amen!**

**P** –May almighty God bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**All–Amen!**

**P** –Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life!

**All–Thanks be to God!**

## WITH HEARTS WIDE OPEN TO GOD AND NEIGHBOR

**T**he times of John the Baptist were bad, characterized, as they were, by selfishness, greed, pride, aggressiveness, oppression of the weak . . . This can be gathered from the answers he gave to those who had been struck by his preaching and asked, “What ought we to do?” John’s strongly worded call to conversion was amply justified. All needed to undergo a “*metanoia*,” a change of mind and attitude, in order to enter the Reign of God.

The situation does not seem to have changed much since the time of John the Baptist. We live in a society plagued with the same moral defects and vices. People are still greedy, selfish, aggressive, . . . And, of course, the temptation is always to see these moral failures in others.

In many cases, it may be true that there is so much evil around us. But it is equally true that we, too, are not perfect. There is evil in us, too. We fail morally almost every day and in various ways. We, too, need to undergo a “*metanoia*,” a radical conversion. “Radical” here means that it should not stop at the individual actions, but has to affect our attitudes and set of values, i.e., the very root of our actions. There shouldn’t be the least doubt: society will start changing for the better the very moment we begin to improve.

Advent is an invaluable opportunity for us to start or resume moving in the right direction. “What are we to do?” we should ask, like those who approached John. The answers may be as many as there are personal moral situations; but a “common denominator” easily applies to all. Our fundamental attitude has got to be one of open-

ness, availability, and goodwill. In practice, this means readiness to share our goods generously with the less fortunate (*see Lk 3:11*); to be fair to everybody and be absolutely honest with all. (*See Lk 3:13-14.*) All this is “openness to people.” It is love of neighbor in its most elementary form, and no one can claim to be exempted or to have done enough.

### PRAYER TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

God of Love and Mercy,

We bring before you women, men and children  
Who have lost their freedom  
Whose dignity has been broken  
Whose lives and future darkened.

Give them back their dignity  
Restore their broken bodies and spirit  
Provide them with the brightest future  
Let them live again in love and peace.

Protect all those who work against human trafficking  
Strengthen the defenders of human dignity  
Shine your light on those who educate the people  
Bless those who care for the victims and survivors.

Touch the hearts of the traffickers and their supporters  
Change their greed to compassion  
Break their chain and network of abuse  
Send exploiters to work for justice instead.

All this we ask in Jesus Christ,  
in unity with God the Father  
and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen!



**WORD & LIFE  
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• **Illustrations:** A. Sarmiento, B. Cleofe • **Circulation:** F. Edjan