

Integral Faith

"Homily helps and liturgy resources highlighting care for our common home."



Homily Helps and Petitions for the 3rd Sunday of Advent, Cycle C (December 15, 2024)

Homily Helps

† Scripture Passages to Note:

Zephaniah 3: The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a mighty savior; he will rejoice over you with gladness and renew you in his love.

Philippians 4: Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again: rejoice!

Luke 3: The crowd asked John the Baptist, "What should we do?"

† Comments for the Day:

Rejoice! The scripture readings on this Gaudete Sunday build up like a dramatic crescendo. First, the prophet Zephaniah proclaims that God, in the midst of his people, is breaking into song and dance because the promised Day of the Lord has arrived.

The once oppressive structures have been dismantled and the enemies of Judah are cleared away. God lovingly sings to Judah as a parent to a daughter rejoicing with her in her liberation. Paul, then invites the Philippians to rejoice not once but twice, calling them to recognize that the Lord is in their midst. The joyous crescendo comes to a climax in the gospel account, where the crowds ask John what it is they are to do now that they have accepted baptism and are prepared to welcome Christ, the Anointed One.

During these Advent days we find ourselves also asking what it is we must do to welcome Christ into our midst. How shall we recognize him? We recall the recommendations John the Baptist offered, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise." "Stop collecting more than is prescribed." "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone."

Today, environmental degradation and climate change compel us to add other suggestions to not only care for others but also for the planet, which Pope Francis proclaims "our common home": "Reduce, reuse, recycle," live sustainably, avoid dumping chemicals into waterways, drive and idle less, support fair trade, and take global warming seriously. Caring for the planet is another way of showing our concern for people, particularly those most in need, those who suffer most from the consequences of our excessive consumption and waste of God's good gifts.

This resource is provided by Catholic Climate Covenant in collaboration with the Integral Faith Team, a group of male and female religious, priests, and lay people dedicated to serving the Church.

The transformation of our minds, and the conversion of our hearts, attitudes and lifestyles, will bring the day closer when our Mother Earth will be restored to her original noble beauty according to God's plan. That will truly be a day for rejoicing and dancing!

Meanwhile, Advent is a time for anticipating, for making the future more present now, for welcoming God more fully into our lives.

† **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:**

The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. (13)

Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning. We can take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedom. (205)

A change in lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic, and social power. This is what consumer movements accomplish by boycotting certain products. They prove successful in changing the way businesses operate, forcing them to consider their environmental footprint and their patterns of production. When social pressure affects their earnings, businesses clearly must find ways to produce differently. This shows us the great need for a sense of social responsibility on the part of consumers. (206)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we might heed the call of John the Baptist to live lives that are morally responsible and that help to create a just and healthy society, let us pray to the Lord.

Option 2: That we might be a generous community and share what we have, so that all people may have a fair share of the earth's bounty during this holiday season and throughout the year, let us pray to the Lord.

Further Resources

Feedback: info@catholicclimatecovenant.org

Webpage: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help

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