

## Third Sunday of Advent

A bus carrying many ugly people crashed on an icy road, burst into flames, and everyone died. Upon arrival in heaven, God said, "Since you have died in a terrible way, I'll grant you one wish before I let you into heaven." The first woman, being a person always concerned on her looks, comes up to God and says "I wish to be beautiful." God grants her wish. The next person can't decide on what to wish for, so he ends up wishing for the same thing. At this point a man at the very back of the line starts to laugh. The next couple, seeing how utterly wondrous the two have become, make their wish to become beautiful also, and the man at the end laughs even louder. One after another, the people wish for the same thing. The closer God gets to the end of the line, the harder the man laughs. When God finally reaches him, he asks "What is your wish my son?" The man says, "Make them all ugly again!"

Dear friends,

The third Sunday of Advent is called 'Gaudete Sunday' which means Rejoice Sunday. We rejoice in the lord always to celebrate Jesus' birth on Earth. The readings today help us to prepare ourselves to meet the light of the world and witness to him in our hearts and in our lives.

In the first reading from the book of Isaiah, prophet brings the good news after being broken for generation in the Babylonian exile. The Jews were trying to reestablish themselves from all levels of bondage. The prophet calls himself anointed because of the new freedom that he can breathe and renovate the desecrated temple and land. The joy of the Jews was compared to the bride and bridegroom adorned with jewels and attire. The joy brings new life as earth brings its plants. It was a favorable time for them from God. Jesus read this passage in the synagogue as his mission (Luke 4:16-20).

St. Paul in the second reading asks us to rejoice and pray. Joy, prayer and thanksgiving are to be the pattern of life for all who looks for lord's arrival. Guided by prayer and thanksgiving will bring joy and help us to be good and refrain from evil.

In the gospel today, John the Baptist testified about Messiah's coming. As we reflected last week, it was John's mission to prepare the ground for Jesus. He freely acknowledged that he was not the messiah that people await, nor he wanted to be considered as prophet. He wanted to be an indicator or voice. It was very clear that he completely focused on his mission to introduce Jesus into the world. His main focus is to witness for Jesus. He did with humility.

Today the true joy comes when we witness for Jesus Christ with humility. there are lot of examples in John's Gospel where different people witnessed for Jesus. John the Baptist, Samaritan woman, Nicodemus, the evils spirits, Jesus works, the blind men and so on. When they witness for Jesus, they all were filled with Joy.

We are called to testify Jesus in our midst in a humble way. We don't need advertisements for our witnessing. Sometimes we do in a business world. But our life should be an example and true witness to Jesus Christ.

Why few people are remembered in our life? Because, they have touched our lives by so many things. That is witnessing. Example: Mother Theresa.

Let us ask the lord's grace to be a good witness for Jesus Christ. The joy of Jesus, the joy of Christmas, can only be ours to the extent that we work with Jesus to bring joy into the lives of others. Let us remember that Christmas is not complete unless we show real generosity to those who have nothing to give us in return.