

Third Sunday of Advent

A man goes to the doctor with a swollen foot. After a careful examination, the doctor gives the man a pill big enough to choke a horse. "I'll be right back with some water," the doctor tells him. The doctor has been gone a while and the man loses patience. He hobbles out to the drinking fountain, forces the pill down his throat and gobbles down water until the pill clears his throat. He hobbles back into the examining room. Just then the doctor comes back with a bucket of warm water. "Ok, after the tablet dissolves, soak that foot for about 20 minutes.

Dear Friends,

This Sunday is traditionally called Gaudete Sunday which means a joyful waiting. As we prepare ourselves for salvation of the lord we patiently wait for the lord and prepare ourselves. The readings help us to prepare the lord with proper and patient waiting.

In the first reading, prophet Isaiah says that God who guided Israel in the desert and through the ratification of the covenant with Moses, he comes in the midst to save them. when he comes, they will be strengthened and healed. Their sorrow will become Joy. The same thing we read in the Gospel today. Jesus tells the disciples of John to go and tell John what they had seen and heard. It is a fulfilment of the old testament in Jesus Christ.

In the second reading James talks about patience and proper waiting. He gives an example of the farmer who waits for the due time for its fruits. Patient waiting is worth doing with high expectations for the fruits that bring joy. In the Gospel, we notice John the Baptist whose whole life was spent in active waiting for the coming of the promised messiah. John expected a powerful messiah who would overthrow the Romans and build the kingdom. But he heard a different one. Jesus praises John the Baptist for his active waiting and preparing the way. Still Jesus praises anyone who does the same will be greater in kingdom of God.

Who are the least?

These are the ones who have been touched by the encounter with Jesus. They are his disciples who prepare with patience and actively wait with firm conviction and trust.

What are waiting for? Do we want to be the least in the kingdom of God? How do we prepare ourselves?

We need to do these things while waiting. First is to realize what is happening at present. We worry about the future and the past. Living in the present is the priority. Secondly, we need to recall that God makes the future safe. God has promised that, in ways we cannot understand. Patience is really a way of remembering the constant love of God, no matter how frightening or disconcerting the future may seem or may actually be. We need to slow down, look around, and live. Mary and John the Baptist would the good examples.