

Let Justice
spring up!

Gaudete Sunday
Advent



San Ignacio de Loyola Parish

December 13, 2015

REFLECTION ON THE WORD

In terms of our everyday lives, most of us are too over-scheduled even to think about asking a question such as “What should we do?” We rush from one thing to the next, just barely squeaking by. Choices seem nonexistent. We just want to get through our day being on time for work, getting the kids to soccer, getting something to eat for ourselves and our family, finding time to get



the homework finished, answering emails, checking up on our social media sites, texting a few messages. We fall in bed, sleep a few hours, then get up and start

the hectic routine all over again. “What should we do?” Ah, to even have the luxury of time to ask the question! At this midpoint in **Advent**, the Gospel calls us to stop, examine our lives and relationships and perhaps prioritize in a different way how we spend our time.

John the Baptist challenged the people who asked him, “What should we do?” by admonishing them to far exceed their present way of acting toward others. Yet even such “good news” does not measure up to what Jesus asks of us. He asks us to live the Gospel (no less) he came to reveal, a Gospel that exacts the gift of our very selves. If we ask, “What should we do?” we must be prepared for an answer that challenges us. Are we willing even to ask the question?

Words to reflect upon: we must be prepared for an answer that challenges us

**We Rejoice!
We want to See!**

BECOMING AN ADVENT PEOPLE

The words of the mighty **Isaiah** resound in our ears during this holy season:

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace”.

We long for this Prince of Peace. We desperately want peace. We storm heaven: “Lord, send us your peace!” We wonder why he doesn’t answer. Could it be that it may be up to US, each of us as individuals, to begin the work of constructing that peace? Could we be in part responsible for the situation we deplore because of our inaction, our apathy, for not accepting personal responsibility for dealing with the problem?

Certainly we have largely forgotten how to make peace. We no longer are known for our harmony as a people. We don’t seem to know what to do, where to start. Advent seems the perfect season to decide to do the work of constructing peace, to learn how to do it. We will each have to start as individuals, then as family groups, then as neighbors and then, finally, as parts of a larger society. There is work to be done.

The tools for this work of constructing peace are not impossible, out of our reach. They are our traditional values of compassion, empathy, harmony, and tolerance. We must resurrect these values; talk about them in our hearts and in our families; learn to treasure them once more and hold fast to them; integrate them into our lives and then teach them to our children and grandchildren. There is much to meditate on during this **Advent** season in our quest for peace. We can learn to construct peace. It is justice work. It is important work. It is God’s work.

9:30 COMMUNITY INFORMATION



Saturday, December 19th, at 8am, our 9:30 community will host the traditional Aguinaldo Mass. We’ll miss you if you’re not there, so get up early, pick up your pandereta or any old thing that makes noise and worship with us in true Puerto Rican Christmas style!

THE HOLY YEAR OF MERCY

POPE FRANCIS launched his yearlong push for a global Catholic church of mercy and forgiveness last Tuesday, December 8th, beginning the Jubilee year focused on those virtues, by opening the holy door at St. Peter's Basilica and calling for a church that always puts mercy before judgment.



In a solemn Mass in a St. Peter's, the pontiff also praised the work of the Second Vatican Council and said the newly-opened Jubilee "compels us not to neglect the spirit which emerged" from that event.

"This Extraordinary Holy Year is itself a gift of grace," Francis said during the homily. "To enter through the Holy Door means to rediscover the deepness of the mercy of the Father who welcomes all and goes out to meet everyone personally."

"How much wrong we do to God and his grace when we affirm that sins are punished by his judgment before putting first that they are forgiven by his mercy!" the pope exhorted. "It is truly so," he said. "We have to put mercy before judgment, and in every case God's judgment will always be in the light of his mercy."

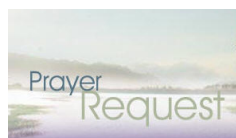
"Let us abandon all fear and dread, for these do not befit men and women who are loved," said Francis. "Instead, let us live the joy of encounter with the grace that transforms all."

THE LOGO – by Jesuit Father Marko I. Rupnik – presents a small summa theologiae of the theme of mercy. It represents an image of the early Church: that of the Son having taken upon his shoulders the lost soul demonstrating that it is the love of Christ that brings to completion the mystery of his incarnation culminating in redemption. The logo expresses the profound way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity and does so with a love with the power to change one's life. Worthy of note is that while the Good Shepherd, in his great mercy, takes humanity upon himself, his eyes are merged with those of man. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, the new Adam, one's own humanity and the future that lies ahead, contemplating, in his gaze, the love of the Father.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,

1 Timothy 2:1

LET US PRAY TOGETHER TODAY for the chronically ill: Sylvia Tasner, Fr. Vega, Jerry and Albert Vega, Maggie Maziarz and Rudy & Sonia Méndez. *On this Gaudete Sunday, let us beg God together to touch the hearts of those responsible for so much violence on this Island with His Son's love so that we may all live in relative peace and brotherhood during this Christmas Season.*



¡GAUDETE!

Because Christmas is almost here
Because dancing fits so well with music
Because inside baby clothes are miracles.

GAUDETE

Because some people love you
Because of chocolate
Because pain does not last forever
Because Santa Claus is coming.

GAUDETE

Because there really are angels
Because your fingers fit your hands
Because forgiveness is yours for the asking
Because of children
Because of parents.

GAUDETE

Because the blind see
And the lame walk,

GAUDETE

Because lepers are clean
And the deaf hear,

GAUDETE

Because the dead will live again
And there is good news for the poor,

GAUDETE

Because of Christmas
Because of Jesus
You rejoice.



– Brad Reynolds

Blessed are You, Energizing and Transforming God!

PRAYING WITH ISAIAH DURING ADVENT

The words from the great Isaiah are our guide during Advent. His words are meant to console us and offer us hope. These quotations are taken from the readings of **Advent**. The links are to the full reading for that day.



The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day

of vindication by our God. **Isaiah 61**

Let justice descend, O heavens, like dew from above, like gentle rain let the skies drop it down. Let the earth open and salvation bud forth; let justice also spring up! I, the LORD, have created this. **Isaiah 45**