

11/30/2016 10:35 PM



HOMILY

3RD SUNDAY ADVENT CYCLE A

GAUDETE SUNDAY (REJOICE)

BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AND

DEACON Bob Baker

The thief went before the judge and the judge asked him “What were you charged with?”

“Doing my Christmas shopping early.”

The judge said “That was not a crime, how early.

“Before the store opened!”

This has nothing to do with my homily, but it is Gaudete Sunday, which means rejoice.

Gaudete Sunday invites us to rejoice in all that is good around us. It challenges us to recognize the presence of God in everything that promotes freedom and communion.

The more we participate in Jesus' work, the more we will understand that we have encountered God's wish to be in close relationship with us.

He wants to heal, forgive, and bless us.

He wants to show us his love not condemn us.

Jesus can perform miracles for our benefit, but do we attribute our blessings or miracles to just good luck?

As we continue, this Advent season to prepare for Christ's coming.

We knew Advent is a season of preparation. Many times it means decoration, parties and presents. We may even have some passing thoughts of the Incarnation, the birth of Christ.

This Gaudete Sunday is a good time to slow down and be attentive to what the Holy Spirit is revealing in our hearts and minds about God who loves us so deeply that he humbled himself to be one of us born as a baby in Bethlehem.

That might be why the church put Gaudete Sunday right in the middle of the Advent Season to remind us this is a joyful time.

Another reason to be reminded of this is when John questions Jesus from prison in today's Gospel. It is not as much for him that he is asking as it is for his disciples sake and ours.

(pause)

After Jesus explains to John's disciples he says something that I found unique and interesting-----

And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.-----

You see he understood John's reason and was not offended by it.

You see when the Scribes and Pharisees ask him almost the same question, They wanted proof that he was an imposter.

In some ways John's disciples and us might have been the blind, the lame, the deaf.

The ones in need of cleansing of our hearts and souls.

That is if we have got caught up in the world of selfishness and self-centeredness.

So as we give presents and we celebrate parties with those we care about in our lives.

Let's consider this year to give gifts that really speak to the deepest needs of those whom we care about. Offer the gifts of hope, love joy and peace in the form of a visit, a call or a helping hand. And let this Advent Season be a time of dedication and attentiveness.

So as we give presents and we celebrate parties with those we care about those in our lives.

Then remember this is called Gaudete Sunday for a reason, because we are to rejoice and let the world know why we are rejoicing.

We must spread that joy to all those around us!

A good example of this is these altar rails.

These altar rails were filled with paper stocking with request for gifts.

As you can see there are none left.

No one question if they deserved them you just reached out. We need to do this all year round.

I read something the other day and I can't remember it word for word but it is still a good lesson for us. We can talk to people about our religion and our faith all day long, that is action with our tongue, and chances are the words don't mean anything. But when we walk the talk in other words using the tongue in our shoes, not our mouth is when we get results.

I want to leave you with the closing sentence in today's gospel, of how special Jesus thought John the Baptist was and how he wants to make you and I even more special:

And I quote: “ I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptists yet the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.”

Rejoice and be glad this is the day the Lord has made for you and me!!!!

That is what he wants for all of us “ eternal joy!!!”