

Fr. Max Oliva, S.J.
December 13, 2020

GAUDETE SUNDAY

“The Advent scripture readings present a curious mixture. They exhort us to live and act as to be ready for the Lord’s coming, but they also promise fulfillment far beyond our dreams. They offer promises but also warnings. They counsel patience but also a kind of passionate impatience.”

(Monika Hellwig)

Today the emphasis is on JOY. Today’s celebration reminds us- that despite the struggles we experience we have ample reason to hope because of God’s goodness.

The message of our First Reading: the prophet Isaiah sought to comfort a weary people (Boy! How we can relate to this because of the coronavirus). It is a message of liberation and lasting divine favor:

v “glad tidings to the poor”

v “healing of the brokenhearted”

v “release to prisoners”

Isaiah’s response: “I rejoice heartily in the Lord; in my God is the joy of my soul.”

SOUL: Here is our Blessed Mother’s take on it:

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;

My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

Mary’s rejoicing centers on the Lord’s greatness and her “lowliness.” A very similar disposition as John the Baptist had:

“I am not the Christ.”

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“the one coming after me; I am not worthy to even untie his sandal strap.”

Lowliness

Humility

Mary also praises God for “filling the hungry with good things.”

The economically poor – like Juan Diego to whom the Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared (her feast day was yesterday)

So, Gaudete Sunday – joyful praise.

What brings you joy?

The laugh of a child

A good (clean) joke

A special piece of music (“O’ Happy Day”)

Reflecting on the true meaning of Christmas

Quality time with a good friend

The beauty of nature

The joy of giving, especially at this time of the year

CONCLUSION

Rejoice in the Lord always

for the Lord is near.

Give gratitude to God

for the blessings you have

received:

Peace of mind and heart

Freedom from anxiety

and fear.

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*The Lord is near to
encourage and to comfort*

You.

Rejoice in the Lord always

For the Lord is near.

*“Joy trembles on smiling lips
and shines from the eyes.”**

*Joy lifts our spirits, in spite of
the woes of the world.*

*We praise God for loving us
and having compassion on us.*

AMEN

* By Rita Ferrone