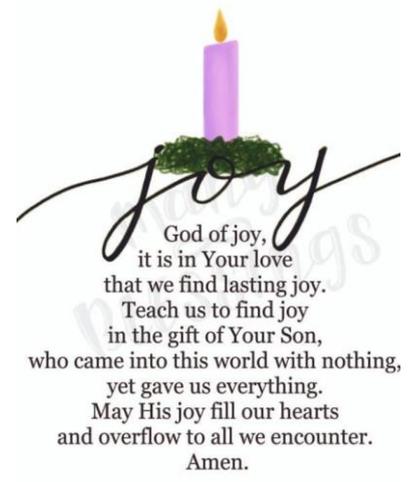


Third Sunday in Advent – 11th December 2022

Gaudete Sunday 2022

Advent is a time to recognise the presence of Jesus Christ in our World

- Christ Encountered Everyday



KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

This time of year is an extra busy time for people. Many people are preparing to travel home for Christmas and enjoy time off work/school. Stores are busy, the streets are crowded, decorations and lights are sparkling all over. Christmas music is playing on the radio, friends and families meet up, and there is always last minute Christmas shopping to be done.

While much of this is part of life, we must ask ourselves the important question: How can we keep Christ in all of this? Why not spend some time in these busy days praying for the homeless and doing a random act of kindness for them. Pope Francis asked us in a twitter message, *'When we meet a person truly in need, do we see the face of God?'* This week let's keep Christ in Christmas by seeing the face of God in all we meet.

Over to you.....

- *Where is there evidence of Jesus' life around you?*
- *How can you open your eyes and ears to the presence of Jesus in your own life?*

POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER 2022

- **Pope Francis' prayer intention for the month of December is for volunteers for not-for-profit organisations.**

In our busy lives, volunteering can feel like something that is just too difficult to fit in. But, if we all made a small amount of time each month to volunteer for a charitable cause, the world would be a better place. This month Pope Francis tells us that *"Being a volunteer who helps others is a choice that makes us free; it opens us to other people's needs – to the demands of justice, to the defence of the poor, to the care of creation. It means being artisans of mercy; with our hands, with our eyes, with our attentive ears, with our closeness"*.



This month Pope Francis invites us to join in his prayer, *"...That volunteer not-for-profit and human development organisations may find people willing to commit themselves to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths of international co-operation."*

REFLECTION

John the Baptist was the older cousin of Jesus. At that time and in that region he was famous and had many disciples. Yet, John the Baptist, the man who had such influence on the people of his time still had his moments of darkness. Imprisoned in Herod's dungeon he begins to have doubts. *"was I wrong about Jesus – is he really the Messiah, to one sent by the Father to save us?"*. So, he sends messengers to Jesus. Jesus does not send back reassurances or persuasive arguments. He just asks the messengers to open their eyes and see the evidence of Jesus's life.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

God our Father, you loved us so much that you sent your only son into the world to be our saviour and friend. Bless us as we wait for the coming of your Son. Open our hearts so that we may recognise him and make him welcome when he comes – what ever form he may take.

We make this prayer through your Son, Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Amen.