

December 14-15, 2019

Third Sunday of Advent - Gaudete. - REJOICE!

Isaiah 35:1-10

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

240 hours (give or take) till Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The seasonal consumer extravaganza is about to reach its culmination and the 'Post-Christmas' rush to return gifts and avail of dramatic price cuts (so as to make way for Valentine's items) will rival Black Friday's madness. Thus, is the environment in which the voice of Isaiah struggles to be heard: 'Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak, say to those whose hearts are frightened: be STRONG, FEAR NOT!' With so much attention focused on the material gifts upon assorted 'gift lists', what are the things within us that no amount of extravagance can satisfy? A son or daughter who is lost: literally, spiritually or emotionally? A marriage that is dry and lifeless? A relationship that has gone sideways and pride is keeping us from mending it? Regrets of choices not made earlier in life? Regrets of choices made...but were wrong from the start? Emptiness and loneliness? Secrets hidden that long to be revealed? While the holiday lights twinkle on homes and buildings and JOY is SCREAMED from every advertisement, many of those wearing their reds, greens and festive holiday garb carry within them the dull ache of emptiness and futility; no matter how big the pile of presents beneath the tree, their heart, their soul is not consoled. The Gospel of Matthew, while written in regards to the ADULT Jesus, nonetheless applies to the infant whom we await: because of Jesus, the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. 240 hours remaining to simply ASK JESUS TO BE BORN WITHIN YOUR HEART...and then the rest of the year to unwrap the gift of his presence.

Thank you for sharing these Advent days with our Santa Clara community, your presence among us is both a gift and a HUGE responsibility. YOU ARE INVITED, THIS SUNDAY to the annual Rectory Christmas OPEN HOUSE from 2pm-5pm (sharp, no lingering past 5!) 5475 Bayberry Way is the address, please be mindful of not blocking anyone's driveway when parking. Warm sweaters and jackets are recommended for sitting outdoors while enjoying the edible treats...at least it is NOT supposed to rain! You are also invited to this Thursday's NIGHT OF STORY AND SONG at 7pm. Seminarian Vincent will read a beautiful Christmas story accompanied with sing-along Christmas carols from our Music Ministry. You are welcome to enjoy Christmas cookies, wassail (mulled cider) and hot cocoa....and it is ALL FREE. Just a pleasant way to regather yourself amid the frenzy of the season, courtesy of the parish that loves you. Please take a Bulletin with you as you depart and please remember, you are LOVED!
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