

*John came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light.*

John 1:6-8

John the Baptist, whose life spanned both the Old and New Testaments, shows us how Jesus is the fulfilment of all the hopes expressed in the Old Testament. He came as a witness to speak for the light and it was for John to decrease as Christ increased. On this Sunday when we are called to rejoice and persevere in prayer, we are also called to be witnesses to the Light of Christ '**no matter our age or state of health**'. (RL 7)

During the dark winter months the sun remains below the horizon and many countries experience total darkness and people long for the light of Spring. But what about the darkness in people's lives this Advent? This darkness can be poverty and war, terrorism, asylum seekers and refugees, homeless people, mental health issues and a pandemic that brings much anxiety, suffering and death. John the Baptist said that Jesus is the real light, the genuine light who changes things by his love, compassion, encouragement, forgiveness, healing and strength. He is there to lighten our darkness just as we were born, called and sent to be a light for others in their moments of darkness.

*Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands, no feet on earth but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes with which He looks with
compassion on this world.*

*Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,
yours are the hands with which He blesses all the world.*

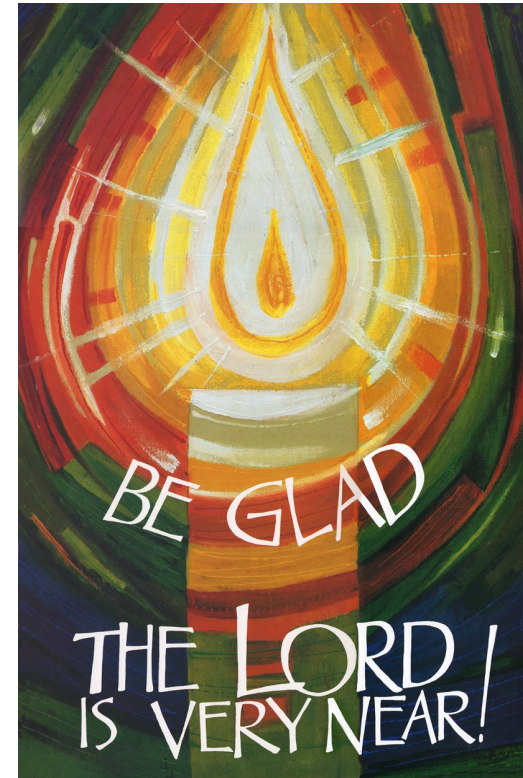
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Teresa of Avila

*Let Christ's light end darkness this Advent by our loving
witness to joy, prayer and hope.*

*The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken.*

Isaiah 61: 1-2



*Listen, come to me;
I want to make you happy*

RL1 / LEW 66

Third Sunday of Advent 2020

*My soul glorifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.*

Luke 1: 46-50

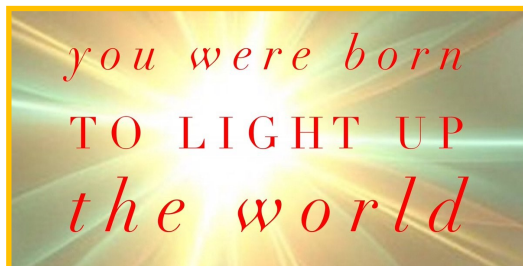
Today, the third Sunday of Advent, is a day for rejoicing as the Lord's coming draws near. It brings us a message of freedom and mercy for all people through God's all-embracing love and the baptism with the Holy Spirit by Jesus as prophesied by John the Baptist. For both Isaiah and Mary (Magnificat in Responsorial psalm) what is the source of their rejoicing and how can this joy be manifested in our mission and daily lives? Each of us is called and anointed

*To bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;
to proclaim liberty to captives,
and freedom to those in prison.*

Isaiah 61: 1-2

In the responsorial psalm Mary's spirit rejoices in God and speaks of God's mercy from age to age in '**filling the starving with good things**'. The fruits of the Spirit of joy are manifested in the way in which we live our daily lives and our concern for others. Our Rule of Life 11 also expresses very clearly '**that by the total gift of ourselves we are to be the Good News for humanity whom God loves so much**'. The joy of the Good News fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.

Reflect on what it means for you to be Good News and Joy to others this Advent and into the future '**For if we have received the love and joy that restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love and joy with others**'? (EG 8)



*Be happy at all times;
pray constantly.*

1Thessalonians 5:16

Richard Rohr has written that the response of the soul to the Light of Christ within us is adoration and joy, thanksgiving, worship and listening in the depths of our heart to the God who speaks to us. Today's reading from St Paul tells us '**to pray constantly, and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus**'. As we draw nearer to Christmas we can find ourselves increasingly busy but, like Marie Louise when she spoke of the Oratory of the Heart, we too carry the presence of Christ within us whatever we are doing and no matter how busy we are. Pope Francis frequently speaks of '**our mission urgently needing the deep breath of prayer for without constant prayer all our activity can become fruitless and our message empty**'. (EG259)

God has called you and he will not fail you.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

As you pray quietly in the Lord's presence what Word of God speaks to you today? Is this Word '**a lamp for your steps and a light for your path**' each day as you joyfully bear witness to Christ by your life?

In both LEW 183 and the Original Rule of Life of the Daughters of Wisdom, Montfort makes it very clear that the search and desire for Wisdom leads to constant and persevering prayer. The life of Montfort himself bears witness to the intense moments of solitude and prayer that he sought in seeking Wisdom. May we follow in his footsteps.

*I prayed and understanding
was given to me,
I pleaded urgently and the
spirit of Wisdom came to me.*

LEW 183

