

Third Sunday of Advent
December 10-11, 2011 - Cycle B

“Gaudaete”

A third Advent candle is burning. Violet vestments turn to Rose vestments. The Advent readings continue to point to a coming Messiah. The Messiah’s name shall be “Emmanuel, God with us.” John the Baptist is His herald. Mary is His mother. The first words of the old Introit, are “Gaudaete in nomino Domini iterum dico Gaudaete.” “Rejoice in the name of the Lord, again I say rejoice.”

“Rejoice?” questioned the old disgruntled, lapsed catholic? “Rejoice?” the old man kept asking the little girl? “Rejoice, when the economy is flat; rejoice when the Arab world seems to explode on all fronts; rejoice when the Euro has no value; rejoice when the major corporations seek profit over democracy; rejoice when democracies are teetering for lack of leadership; rejoice?” The old man had not been a practicing catholic for years.

Well, the little girl looked at the old man and then looked at the cross she was wearing and said, "I believe in Jesus. He will save me from the problems all around me. That's why I wear this cross."

"Mush and nonsense," said the older, disillusioned lapsed catholic. Then the old man looked at the little girl and said, "The cross was an instrument of extreme torture and death. It was meant for criminals, not the so called Son of God. It was the 'electric chair' of the Roman Empire. Would you wear an electric chair around your neck? Tell me girl, what would you do? Would you wear an electric chair around your neck if Jesus had been killed in one?"

And the little girl, just about ten years old, looked at the poor, old disillusioned lapsed catholic and said, "Sir, if it meant my salvation I would wear it. That's why I wear the cross." And she is right.

“Gaudaete in nomino Domini;” Rejoice in the Lord always.

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So we pray: *Lord Jesus your first coming was surrounded by signs and wonders; by a voice crying in the wilderness; by an angel appearing to Mary. Your advent, Your birth, Your life and ministry, O Lord, all pointed to and ended with Your death on the Cross, the Cross which is a sign of contradiction. We rejoice in You Lord Jesus and in Your cross. Come, Emmanuel, God with us, and we shall be saved. A prayer we make in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

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