

My Third Advent Message:

-Notes from the Guadete Sunday Homily / Rejoice in the Lord.

-The book *The Three Ordinary Voices of God* by Matthew Kelly is my gift to the parish. Get through Mathew's set-up (1st hundred pages) and you will find Matthew reminding us that we need to slow down, find silence, and come to focus on the things that are truly important in our lives as we continue to hear the voice of God. This book will be given out the week of Christmas and remain in the church entrances during the Christmas season.

Now to our 3rd Advent Sunday readings:

-Gaudete is Latin for Rejoice / The prophet Zephaniah, writing during the reign of King Josiah (640-609 B.C.), issued an urgent call for reform and spiritual and liturgical renewal. After warning of judgment and the Day of the Lord (chapter 1-2), He concluded with a hymn of joy to be sung by the faithful remnant when restored / The period of the Church Jesus founded is the faithful remnant, and now is gathering souls to be healed and to be a part of this fulfillment and restoration of the faithful remnant, including ancient Israel.

-Luke: Reminds us that while on this journey our Lord wants to help us live this joy out by living the commandments / And the commandments can be summarized by love: "To Love is to will the Good of the other."

-From the early church and the saints / We were always called to be upright in our relationships / To love and will the good of the others in our lives / To serve and to be a gift ourselves.

-St. Lucy and the lives of the Saints, always found fulfillment by a relationship with God, leading them to love, and then to be a gift to the other / They realize we were created to be connected to the other / We find ourself through the other / When our lives include and are interconnected with each other we find joy. ***

-Those working with our youth have observed: A culture telling our youth: you are the center of the universe / you can define yourself / you have your truth and rights / You will find fulfillment and in and through yourself.

-This has created a system where we are all on our own autonomous little islands with our own rules and rights / Disconnected from each other.

-Contrast this with our Gospel: When the people asked the Baptist, "What should we do?" his response was to share and give / To live upright lives / Which will always lead to our Psalm and St. Paul: "Rejoice," "Cry out with joy and gladness."

-We are created to be interconnected / A Family / We belong to God / To each other / Husband to Wife – Wife to Husband] / Parents to Children – Children to

Parents] / Families to [Society - to Family] / Family to Church etc. / We belong and are connected to each other.

-Through Faith we learn this is how God created us to be / Any other system is hollow and empty / Lacking Joy.

-Healthy Societies are based on virtue / sacrifice / willing the good of the other, which we call LOVE.

-That is why Catholic Social Teaching and action from our very core is based on the Common Good / Service / Taking care of each other.

-My message today: “Lets take care of those God has placed in our lives.” Which will lead us to Rejoice and to Joy.

-Because Love personified is what awaits us in the Manger / This should be part of our anticipation during Advent / To continue to prepare for our redemption and future restoration / And our slow transformation in finding ourselves, Love, and Joy though the other in the present.

**Vivat Jesus,
Father Vic Gournas**

*****Another homily could be added when “the other” does not correspond in the same way in love / Perhaps someone’s past actions were hurtful / We are in a broken world filled with broken people and relationships / Perhaps some future words on forgiveness, and what it actually means to forgive. 🙄 😊**