

Third Sunday of Advent  
December 17, 2017

Reading 1

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11

Responsorial Psalm

Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54

Reading 2

1 Thes 5:16-24

Following the advice of one wiser than me, I slowly read the selections of the week from: Isaiah, Luke's Responsorial, 1 Thessalonians and the Alleluia with an open heart. She was right; they "spoke to me." As I highlighted many of the words and phrases several thoughts came to mind.

So, where do these lead me? Surprisingly, I had immediate mental pictures reminding me of how blessed I am to have met my husband and embraced his Catholic faith. We agree our meeting was God's plan fulfilled. The bond we share is firmly rooted in Catholicism. Throughout our lives together, God has "done great things" for us and we have been the beneficiaries of His blessings. Certainly, our children are gifts; however, His love, "Spirit" and "promise of mercy" are even more evident when we face life changes, challenges of parenting and sad events. For His love and strength, I "rejoice" and "in all circumstances I give thanks."

"The Spirit of the Lord is ever-present upon me". As His lowly servant, I rejoice in that manifestation and sincerely look forward to attending Mass and my daily personal prayer time. My appreciation often seems inadequate compared to what I have gained as a believer in our Risen Lord.

God has provided me with a wonderful life and given me the opportunity to share Him with others. He sent a wonderful man to save me and continually guide me on the right path. God's "salvation" and "the joy in my soul" cannot be contained. "The one who calls me is faithful." As a result, I must "pray without ceasing" and "announce" His good works. Those who know me, recognize my active faith because I am more than happy to shout to the Lord loudly and without hesitation. I am in awe of God's mercy for us all.

Isaiah reminds us that each of us must "bring glad tidings to the poor." How can we do this? Charity and love for our fellow man can be expressed in many ways. Certainly, we can give to disaster relief and donate coats from our bulging closets and food from our well-stocked pantries. We can keep fast food gift cards in the car and when a guy or gal is holding a sign up by the stoplight, we can roll down the window and hand over one or two of those cards. Over the years, I have recognized that "the poor" aren't just people with little money, clothing, or food. The poor are among us always. The poor are people in need. That need may be a kind word today or a hug tomorrow. The poor might be someone who has lost a family member or a job.

Our Gospel this Third Sunday of Advent reminds us: "A man named John was sent from God. He came.., to testify to the light so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light." I want to testify to the Light by my words and actions because "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." That makes me a very fortunate--blessed person. Thank you Lord, thank you.

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