

December 15, 2024



Daily Reflections

UNLEASH YOUR JOY!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger

Excerpts from Today's Readings

The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty savior; he will rejoice over you, with gladness, and renew you in his love, he will sing joyfully because of you, as one sings as festivals.

ZEPHANIAH 3:17-18A

Brothers and sisters: Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

[John the Baptist said] "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. ... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ..." Exhorting them in many ways he preached the good news to the people.

Reflection

As we begin this third week of Advent, let's look at why the Advent wreath has one rose or pink candle and three purple candles. This pink or rose candle signifies the theme for this third week of Advent, and that is joy. Often the three other weeks of Advent (weeks 1, 2, 4) focus us on themes of hope, peace, and love. Joy gives us a different feeling and reminds us of the joy of preparing ourselves for the birth of our Savior. When joy bubbles up from within, it is usually spontaneous and reveals our feelings that perhaps remain under wraps all too often.

When we allow ourselves to experience the joy of Advent, we are giving ourselves a gift that draws us ever closer to God. When we are joyful, others are drawn to us and we can point them to the source of our joy – our Beloved. Joy allows us to let our guard down and experience the raw beauty of this Advent season. We are more apt to engage with others and spread the joy we're experiencing. In the first reading today, we hear how God will "rejoice over us," and simply imagining that can fill us with joy that comes from the Holy Spirit.

In the second reading from Philippians, we are invited to rejoice. This third week of Advent beckons us to sing God's praises with our lives and to spread the joy of the coming birth of our savior with others. We are to let God know what is in our hearts and, in turn, we will experience God's enduring love.

In Luke's gospel, John the Baptist is reminding us that we are baptized in the Holy Spirit. We each have heard and experienced the Good News in our lives; let us rejoice and be glad! Are we allowing ourselves to live as if we have heard the Good News? Are our lives exuding the joy we have in God? If we live into the joy that is found in Jesus, we point the way for others to seek God in their own lives.

Let us Live Joyfully

O God of peace, love, hope and joy, may we open ourselves to experience the joy found in you. May we be beacons of joy that draw others ever closer to you.

O God of abundant joy, as Advent continues to unfold in our lives, may we exude the joy that fills our being as we contemplate the mysteries of life itself.

As we light the third candle, the rose candle of our Advent wreaths, let us be

reminded of our call to bring the Good News to all we meet. Let us be the joy we seek in you.



For Pondering

- As this third week of Advent begins, how might you be the joy our world so desperately needs?
 - What does the joy of Advent mean to you in your life with God? How might you cultivate an ever-deepening sense of joy in your relationship with the Beloved?
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For Prayer

*We pray for the grace to be the joyful love of God
as we move through this day.*

*May we cultivate a sense of joy, peace, hope, and love
deep within ourselves that gently guides and energizes our lives this day.
Amen.*

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