

December 4, 2023



Daily Reflections

REJOICING!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Excerpts from Today's First Reading and Responsorial Psalm

All nations shall stream toward it (the mountain of the Lord's house); many peoples shall come and say: "Come, let us climb the Lord's mountain, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may instruct us in his ways, and we may walk in his paths." ... O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

ISAIAH 2:2-3, 5

I rejoiced because they said to me, "We will go up to the house of the Lord." And now we have set foot within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem, built as a city with compact unity. To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord.

According to the decree for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord. In it

are set up judgment seats, seats for the house of David.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May those who love you prosper! May peace be within your walls, prosperity in your buildings.

Because of my relatives and friends I will say “Peace be within you!” Because of the house of the Lord, our God, I will pray for your good.

PSALM 122:1-4, 6-9

Reflection

In yesterday’s reflection on the First Sunday of Advent, I emphasized the word “coming” and spoke to how we engage with the coming of our Lord throughout this season of Advent. As I read the passage from Isaiah in the first reading, it reminded me of the work we are called upon to do during Advent. Advent is not a time for passivity; it is a time of growing deeper in our love and appreciation of our Beloved. Like the people from long ago who heard the words “let us cling the Lord’s mountain, to the house of the God of Jacob,” we too are called to respond as our journey of Advent unfolds. We are participants, not spectators, as each day of Advent dawns anew.

In the Responsorial Psalm, there is the reminder of the joy, hope, and peace of this beautiful season of Advent. I was struck by the words “Jerusalem, built as a city with compact unity.” My heart aches as I reflect on the devastation of so many in the war in Israel, Gaza, and other parts of the world. I’m moved to deeper prayers for peace and a just end to the tragedy that continues to impact the lives of so many.

Finally, in the closing of this excerpt of Psalm 122, we see the words, “Peace be within you! Because of the house of the Lord, our God, I will pray for your good.” This is a sentiment, a prayer, and disposition I hope we can all embrace. The simple words, “pray for your good” moves me in ways that are hard to articulate. It flows from the ultimate command to love one another as God loves us. I can’t think of a more needed prayer to release into our world than this one at this moment in time.



Colorado
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- What has stirred within you as you prayed the Scriptures today? Perhaps

something in the reflection has captured your interest. Pray for whatever is surfacing within you and know that your prayer is being received by the God who created you.

- On this first Monday of Advent, what is your hope for yourself, others, our world? Allow the Spirit to fill you with the prayers you hold deep within you.

For Prayer

*We pray for the grace to soften our hearts
and allow the Spirit to fill us with a desire
to want the “good of others.”*

*May our inner beings be filled with light, hope, and joy
that gently pour forth our desire to be the good
our world so desperately needs.*

Amen.

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