

**Christ Our Hope Catholic Church**

## ***Faith in Laity Corner***



***Monday, December 18, 2017***

***Year 2/Cycle B***

*Is. 61:1-2,10-11*

***Advent Week 3***

## **Reclaiming My JOY...**

The famous words repeated by a US senator- spoke about ‘reclaiming time’. Well maybe it is **time** as Catholic, we need to ‘*reclaim our joy*’. Yes, this the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent is Gaudete (Joy) Sunday the priest wears his rose color outfit/chasuble and he will read from the Book of Isaiah, but there will be the opening words which speaks of *anointing*. Well to be anointed is a joyful time, you could be anointed about 4 four times in your life. You are anointed at the time of your birth as a baby- Baptism – the welcome into the Catholic church. You are anointed at Confirmation- adulthood in your faith; if you are male, then you are anointed as a priest, the next time is when you are sick. Let us leave that one out- as the oil is different. So most of us are anointed twice and if you are a priest three times... Which of the three oils are used for those three sacraments? Chrism-Oil of Gladness. So the Prophet as the representative of the Voice of God, speaks of being anointed by the Spirit- yes that is the oil of Gladness.

*“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me,” (Is. 61:1)*

Of course when we talk about ‘gladness’ we think of Christmas is coming, what gifts will I get, whose house we will visit.... But Isaiah says something far different. Just when we thought we understood- no we did not

*“He has sent me to bring good news to the afflicted,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,*

*To proclaim liberty to the captives,  
release to the prisoners.” (Is. 61:1)*

Isaiah's words speak nothing of the joy one gets for self??? It is about giving to others. those we over look, those who- hunger, are disease, cold, dying and fearful. Reaching out to the lonely, the depressed, the sad, bedridden, the hopeless; then reaching out to those who are captured in slavery, drugs, abusive relationships and then going to preach freedom in the prison?

*“To comfort all who mourn;” (Is. 61:2)*

There is nothing about this reading that symbolizes JOY? What a reading to remind us of joy!

*“To announce a year of favor from the LORD  
and a day of vindication by our God.” (Is. 61:2)*

But wait.... Those are the 'blessed attitudes' for gaining salvation, not so? Following these rules will be our victory for God and usher in a time of our steadfast faith in Him. Is this the Nativity joy? (*excuse, I dislike the term Christmas- too much money making, gadget buying etc.*) So our joy, isn't for ourselves? It is to give to those who have no idea of joy? We are going to anoint others with this 'oil of gladness' which we are blessed with?

*“To give them oil of gladness instead of mourning,*

*a glorious mantle instead of a faint spirit.” (Is. 61:3)*

We are to be the courage *mantle* for those faint in spirit? Is this what Advent 3's JOY is all about? Sometimes we need to recognize things with new lens, there is need to put ourselves out there, to really allow these words of Isaiah to echo through the ages some 2500 years ago, to reach in our times, in our turmoil, fears, brokenness of spirit, in our pain and anger of the 21 century. People don't change, Isaiah was sent to give Israel hope, Jesus came to give mankind that joyful hope and we as Catholic are mandated to follow feeding the poor, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and those in prison.....etc....As we echo the pray of Mary...

*“I will rejoice heartily in the LORD,*

*my being exults in my God” (Is. 10)*

First we need to reclaim our joy and spread it out there, give the world that hopeful joy, not keep it for ourselves. You better reclaim your JoY and spread it!!

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Let us pray for our country, whose leaders passed legislature which turns its back to the poor, where dishonesty and lies are no longer an embarrassment, while those who seek a better way and follow rules, have laws that are now set against them. May Advent help to reclaim our joy and pass it to others.

Faith in Laity Corner is a weekly review of Sunday's readings written by

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