



a Kendall Hunt Company

Third Sunday of Advent, Year C, Intermediate

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Wed, 10/03/2012 - 20:00

Intermediate Session

Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Luke 3:10-18

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Come, Lord Jesus, fill us with joy and thanksgiving as we wait for your coming.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

We rejoice in the saving power of God this third Sunday of Advent. To begin the session today, make a collage of expressions of joy. Provide magazines, scissors, glue, markers, blank paper and a large sheet of paper or poster board. Invite the children to cut out from the magazines or draw three expressions of joy. Then, make a collage by gluing all the pictures onto the large sheet of paper or poster board. Discuss.

- What are some things that make you joyful?
- How do you spread joy to others?
- Does it make you happy to know that you can have a fresh start after doing something that you regret?

Today we joyfully sing praises to God for all the good things that the Lord has done for us.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading from the Old Testament listen to the prophet rejoice in the goodness of God.

Read Zephaniah 3:14-18a.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why does the prophet rejoice?
- What is God being thanked for?
- What expressions of joy are found in this reading?

In the gospel reading listen to John the Baptist tell us the good news.

Read Luke 3:10-18.

Allow for silence.

- What good news does John the Baptist spread?
- Why is the crowd concerned about what they should do?
- What does John the Baptist tell them that they should do?
- Who does John the Baptist say is coming?



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Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

The Old Testament reading today proclaims joy and gratitude for the saving presence of God. There is no fear, only trust in the goodness of God. In today's first reading Zephaniah speaks of the return of a sinful people to God. The people rejoice and sing praises to the Holy One. They are reconciled with God, and God rejoices over them.

In the gospel reading today, John the Baptist touches the hearts of listeners with his preaching on the coming judgment of God. People from all walks of life come forward asking, "What are we to do?" John responds by challenging the people to examine their lives and see if they need to make changes in order to be more compassionate and just.

John the Baptist proclaims the Good News to the crowd that, "One who is more powerful than I is coming." And the prophet makes clear that moral conversion is necessary in order to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally known as "Gaudete Sunday". Gaudete is a Latin word meaning rejoice. On this Sunday we shout aloud and sing for joy, because God is in our midst.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How can you make a new start this third Sunday of Advent?
- Do you trust that God loves you and always welcomes you back?
- What can you do to express your joy this season?

If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Moral conversion prepares for the coming of Christ.

God created human beings with openness to goodness and truth. We also are created with freedom and the inner voice of conscience. Every person yearns for union with God. That inner longing and the desire for happiness can lead people to make choices that are good and true. Even those people who have not accepted the good news of Jesus are capable of determining what is good and what is evil and act accordingly.

Catholics believe that moral conversion is possible for all and needed by all. Moral conversion is the process of becoming the good people that God created us to be. We are on a faith journey. Along the way changes may need to be made in order for us to reflect the goodness of God. This process of conversion happens throughout our daily lives. Signs of moral conversion are when we do such things as ask for forgiveness, admit our faults, grow in our concern for the poor, and work for justice.

Moral conversion is a life-long process of acknowledging our faults and turning back to God. When we do this we have much reason to rejoice, because God welcomes us and rejoices over our return.

- What gets in the way of you listening to your conscience?



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- Name the signs of moral conversion that you have seen in yourself?

The Gospel in Life

Spread joy to those around you. This week take the time to smile more often, especially to members of your family.

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