

Third Sunday of Advent

*- From the archives of Monsignor John J. Gilchrist
December 17, 1995*

We have reached the third Sunday of Advent. The time for the celebration of the feast of Christ's birth draws closer. The words of the prophet Isaiah continue to be filled with the joyful tidings of that time when the world will be blessed with peace and the splendor of God. All the sorrow and mourning which plagues the earth will come to an end and there will be exaltation everywhere. Isaiah was a prophet who possessed a lofty vision and a strong sense of the transcendence of God. Beyond the fall of the Jewish nation, he looked forward to the time when a remnant of that same nation would survive and rebuild a period of peace and justice under some future descendants of King David.

The gospel account continues to dwell on Saint John the Baptist. It is interesting to note that John, while imprisoned, sent his own disciples to Jesus to inquire whether or not Jesus was "the One" for whom he was preparing the way. It seems apparent that he did not know if Jesus truly was, the long-awaited Messiah. The reply of Jesus to John reaffirms the prophesy of Isaiah. "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind recover their sight, cripples walk, lepers are cured and the deaf hear, dead men are raised to life, and poor have the good news preached to them." What Jesus was doing by sending this message was telling John and his disciples, to examine their own scriptures and take note that he was the fulfillment of the prophesy made by the

prophet Isaiah. When he received this reply from Jesus, John knew that his own work was drawing to a close. The mission of John had been completed and he would say, "He must increase, and I must decrease." The work that was his to do in the world, he had done.

Jesus then went on to speak to John: "...I solemnly assure you history has not known a man born of woman greater than John the Baptizer." There would be no doubt about the role of John and his place in the history of the Church which Jesus Christ would establish.

After speaking about John the Baptist, Jesus continued: "Yet the least born into the kingdom of God is greater than he." What has this to do with us? In the epistle from Saint James which we have heard today, we find an answer. "Be patient until the coming of the [lord.as](#) the farmer must patiently await the yield of the land, you too, must be patient. Steady your hearts, because the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble one against the other. As your models in suffering take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord." For each of us there is a royal destiny. Each of us will meet that destiny at a different time when the Lord calls. But, we must be ready whenever that time comes.

How do we do that? We are prepared if day by day we try to live according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. In good times and in bad, we can fulfill the plan of God for us in our individual lives. If we do this to the best of our ability and keep our priorities in proper order, then we can walk fearlessly into the arms of almighty God when He comes to gather us unto Himself and carry us to that land of which the prophet Isaiah spoke so beautifully.

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将临期第三主日 (12/11/2022)

- 摘自部分 John J. Gilchrist 蒙席案卷，1995 年 12 月 17 日

我们已迎来将临期的第三主日。庆祝耶稣基督诞生的日子近在眼前。依撒意亚先知继续为我们描绘了当世界满载上主平安的祝福和荣耀时，那欢乐的浪潮充满大地。悲愁，哀恸，瘟疫不再存在。依撒意亚先知视野高远，深感天主跨越时空。他预言虽犹大国亡国，但残余的达味王后裔将重建和平和公义。

在福音中，我们有趣地注意到，身在狱中的洗者若翰派他的门徒去问耶稣是否耶稣本人就是那个他为之准备道路的人，显然洗者若翰不清楚耶稣是否就是那个等待已久的默西亚。耶稣的回答证实了依撒意亚先知的预言：“盲人看见，跛子行走，患癞病的得洁净，聋子听见，死人复活，福音传给穷苦的人。”耶稣之所以送给洗者若翰和他的门徒这个信息，用意就是让他们检验圣经，证明耶稣已履行了依撒意亚先知的预言。

今天的福音中指出耶稣就是我们期待的那一位，祂要为我们带来救恩的喜乐，就让我们跟随基督，将这份喜乐带到普世。如“我灵赞颂主”所分享的那样：

「懷著希望期盼並等待救主的降臨」是貫穿將臨期的一個主題。今天前兩篇讀經更是分別以大自然和農夫為喻，教

導我們耐心等待的重要性。在現代社會快節奏下生活的人們，似乎正在失去等待的耐心、一心追求越快越好的成功和收穫。相伴而來的自然也是對天主和他人失去耐心。就連基督信仰也被追求立竿見影效果的「成功神學」所裹挾，淪為膚淺俗氣的「生意經」。「父母之愛子，則為之計深遠。」天主愛人，祂對我們更是有超出我們想象和理解的計劃與安排。願我們借著教會禮儀年的安排，重新找回我們寶貴的耐心，並懂得配合與順從天主的計劃和安排。