

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,
December 12, 2021**

THE SHEPHERD'S CANDLE – JOY



This third week of Advent, let us remember that the good news of Jesus' birth has the power to bring us great joy this Christmas season. Our joy isn't only dependent on what is going on in our life, in our world, or the people that we are with. It doesn't depend on the gifts we give or the gifts we find under the tree. No earthly thing can ever give us complete joy. Our joy comes from God. That joy that flooded the hearts of the shepherds, the angels, the wise men, the hosts of Heaven, and Mary and Joseph is the joy that still has the power to overwhelm our hearts with rejoicing.

Those who gathered around the new baby were blessed because they believed that God had

fulfilled His promises. Mary and Joseph believed and were able to feel the joy of holding baby Jesus in their arms. The shepherds and wise men believed the angels and the signs and experienced the great gladness of worshipping their Messiah.

Those who knew him and recognized him were overjoyed at the coming of Jesus. They saw the Prophecies fulfilled and their fear was replaced with happiness as they gazed on the face of the one who would be their Savior.

Our joy doesn't simply come from our jobs, our family, our relationships, our finances, or our success. Our joy doesn't come from what we have on earth. Our joy is a gift. It is the gift that God gave us that first Christmas in Jesus Christ. Our joy is encompassed in our Savior.

Attentively at your service in our Lord.

Father John Carlos