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 PETITION & THANKSGIVING LETTERS
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**Rejoice in the Lord always;
 again I say rejoice. Indeed the
 Lord is near**

Today is Gaudette Sunday - an occasion to rejoice. The gospel reading shares with us Jesus' message to John the Baptist, who is in prison about the signs of the kingdom that are being worked through him and praises John as more than a prophet. At the same time, Jesus also states that all those who work for the kingdom of God will be as great as John and even greater.

The second reading from the letter of St James teaches us how to prepare for the Lord's coming clearly. It tells us to be patient and not lose heart, not to complain against one another. These instructions appear so simple. But we know that it is not easy to live it up.

Personally, I feel much challenged this week. Two of my friends are ill, one has been admitted to the hospital and the other is waiting to do further tests to determine her condition. The preliminary prognosis is not good. I do feel a little disheartened as I have been praying for their healing but their health appeared to take a downward spiral. I know that the only way is to be patient, not lose heart, to keep the faith and continue praying. God has a larger wisdom that surpasses my understanding.

As I continue to pray, I am reminded of our Lord's goodness in the most difficult situations. It is only right that I continue to give thanks and rejoice. Recently, my mum's helper was hospitalized and had to undergo an emergency operation. Our lives were literally thrown into disarray as her helper was her chief caregiver. It appeared to be a challenging period as we struggle to juggle with work, attending to mum in the evenings, settling her meals and looking after our helper in the hospital. But God gave my husband and I the strength to manage all these tasks with joy. It was absolutely amazing that we did not fight with each other during that period. There were no complaints. We just continued to pray for our helper to get well. She was in hospital for a week and we all rejoiced when she was discharged. Thank God, she is finally well after a month. Due to this recent crisis, our family ties also improved and our helper also decided to renew her contract with us.

There is much to rejoice indeed as the Lord is near. I am reminded that no matter how tough life may appear to be, as long as we give thanks and rejoice over the little things in life, God will lead us to rejoice in the greater things in life.

John the Baptist was a messenger sent before Jesus to prepare a way for Him. How can each one of us also be a messenger for Christ this Christmas and prepare others to receive Him?

Reflection by Hope



3rd Sunday of Advent
 Year A
 15 December 2019

Readings & Responses for the Week

Sun, 15 December	Is 35:1-6,10; Jm 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11 Come, Lord, and save us.
Mon, 16 December	Num 24:2-7,15-17; Mt 21:23-27 Lord, make me know your ways.
Tue, 17 December	Gen 49:2,8-10; Mt 1:1-17 In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.
Wed, 18 December	Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-24 In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.
Thu, 19 December	Jdg 13:2-7,24-25; Lk 1:5-25 My lips are filled with your praise, with your glory all the day long.
Fri, 20 December	Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38 Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory.
Sat, 21 December	Song 2:8-14; Lk 1:39-45 Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just; O sing him a song that is new.

WEEKDAY MASS (MON - FRI)
 Time: 6.30am, 12.15pm, 6.30pm
 Confession: Half an hour before all Masses
 except the morning Mass

SUNSET MASS (SAT)
 Time: 6.30pm

SUNDAY MASS
 Time: 8am, 10am, 12noon*, 5.30pm
 *2nd & 4th Sunday - Mass in Tagalog,
 subject to the availability of priests.

PUBLIC HOLIDAY
 Time: 8am, 6.30pm

SATURDAY MORNING MASS
 Time: 7am

SATURDAY NOVENA DEVOTION
 English: 8am, 9.30am, 11am, 1pm, 4pm, 5.30pm
 Mandarin: 2.30pm
 Confession: After every Novena Service
 except after the 11am service.

DAYS OF OBLIGATION
 Time: 7pm (Eve of Day of Obligation)
 6.30am, 12.15pm, 7pm

Novena notes

3rd Sunday of Advent

"Rejoice: the Lord is near." As Christmas draws closer, the Church emphasizes the joy which should be in our hearts over all that the birth of our Savior means for us. The great joy of Christians is to see the day when the Lord will come again in His glory to lead us into His kingdom. The oft-repeated Veni ("Come") of Advent is an echo not only of the prophets but also of the conclusion of the Apocalypse of St. John: "Come, Lord Jesus," the last words of the New Testament.

Today is known as "Gaudete Sunday". The term "Gaudete" refers to the first word of the Entrance Antiphon, "Rejoice". Rose vestments are worn to remind us of the joy that Christmas is near. We light the rose candle on our Advent wreath - the candle of Joy.



Advent Novena

We are in the 8th week of the Advent Novena and this year's theme is, "The Birth of Jesus". All are welcome. Bring along your family and friends.

14 Dec: Jesus - Saviour, The Light of the World

21 Dec: Jesus - The King

15th December, Simbang Gabi Mass

There will be a Simbang Gabi Mass organized by the Novena Filipino Community on 15th December at 8pm in the Main Church. All are welcome.

Christmas Through The Ages

A Musical presentation by Boni De Souza & Friends.

Date : 20th December 2019.

Time : 8.00pm to 9.30pm.

Venue : Novena Church

Free admission. Love offering would greatly be appreciated.

Tagalog Mass

Please take note there will be a Tagalog Mass on 22nd December 2019 at 12 noon.

"DAWN Skill Development Programme for foreign domestic workers"

Courses on Baking, Cooking and Cake Decoration (Basic & Advance), Sewing and Handicraft from January 2020 till June 2020.

The 1st Batch 2020 Care-Giving Course is scheduled to begin on Sunday, 29th March. Classes will be conducted on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month.

Registration is open

Dates : Sundays in December

Time : 10 am to 2 pm

Venue : DAWN,
Good Shepherd Place,
9, Lorong 8, Toa Payoh,
Singapore 319253.

Contact: 96702880 (Suzeth),
82694546 (Rowena), or
82333728 (Sr. Barbara)

70th Anniversary Logo Competition

We are pleased to announce that the winning entry for the 70th Anniversary Logo Design Competition was submitted by Michael Vendiola. We congratulate Michael. The prize for the winning entry will be presented to Michael on the evening of 31st December 2019 and the winning logo will also be unveiled to launch the celebrations.

Advent Penitential Services for City District at 8pm

16th December - Church of St Alphonsus (Novena Church)

17th December - Church of the Our Lady of Lourdes

Christmas & New Year Mass Times

Christmas Vigil - 24th December
Carolling - 8pm
Mass - 9pm and 12midnight

Christmas Day - 25th December
Mass as usual at 8am, 10am, 12noon and 5.30pm

New Year's Eve - 31st December
Rosary at 10pm
Mass at 10.30pm
(New Year Party / Launch of 70th Anniversary Celebrations at 11.30pm)

New Year's Day - 1st January 2020
Mass as usual at 8am & 6.30pm

Please take note that there will be **No** lunch-time Mass 1st January 2020 being public holiday.