

Third Sunday of Advent

December 13th, 2020

Today, [this weekend] we celebrate Gaudete Sunday, the acclamation to **rejoice, for the Lord is near**. In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians we hear:

REJOICE, ...

PRAY,

GIVE THANKS.

Last Weekend we have been admonished to be sober and alert.

We heard the Prophet Isaiah saying, "Give Comfort, speak tenderly for the time of service is ended, her guilt has been paid".

So perhaps on these last weeks of Advent we may simply pause and rejoice. In every newscast we continuously hear how terrible things are, how many are ill and dying. Yet, our reading here urges us to rejoice, for the Lord is near. The Spirit of God desires to heal the broken hearted, and yet we feel like **we are the captives - not set free**. Perhaps we need to be reminded to speak tenderly to each other, to count on that voice speaking in the desert of our hearts.

Finally, we've got to be thankful.

After all, we are here together [or online], we still are the community of Christ on the Mountain. We still belong to each other. So, let us be grateful; let us retain what is Good. As Paul says, "let us be kept blameless for the coming of our Lord", ... For the one who calls us is faithful.

And above all, let us be grateful.