

## The Third Sunday of Advent

December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Here we are on the third Sunday of ADVENT. Gaudete Sunday, Rejoice Sunday. And our first reading from the prophet Zephaniah, "Fear not, O Zion, be not discouraged! The Lord your God is in your midst..." And we light the Pink Candle.

John the Baptist is still the main figure in the advent Gospel today. He continues to announce that the Savior is near. The people were getting excited as John kept emphasizing the approaching arrival. The Crowd shouted: "Are You the Christ???" But John became even more incessant. NO, "I am Baptizing with water, but the one coming will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with FIRE".

What? What does this mean? With Fire. It is here in Luke's Gospel that the Baptist announces that the Christ will baptize with the Holy Spirit. It seems that John is the first prophet to announce the coming of the Holy Spirit. And that Spirit is Mighty. And what about this FIRE. Fire purifies, destroys, and creates anew. So, what is this Baptism of Fire. Fire can symbolize many things: destruction, purification, resurrection, passion, desire, warmth, love.

For our reading I'm suggesting Fire means purification. So, may the Baptism that John refers to be a cleansing, healing, and the opportunity to start again.