

*Jesus in our midst - An activity for the home.*

Gaudete Sunday has for many years been the day when the children of Rome bring the figurines of Baby Jesus from their cribs to St. Peter's Square to be blessed by the Pope during the Angelus. The day is affectionately known as "Bambinelli Sunday." Your baby Jesus may have been blessed at Mass. At home now, say this prayer together as the baby Jesus is cradled in someone's hands.

God our Father, you loved us so much that you sent us your only Son, Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, to save us and lead us back to you. We pray that, with your blessing, this image of Jesus might be a sign of your presence and love in our homes. Open our hearts, that we might receive Jesus in joy, do always what he asks of us, and see him in those who need our love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your beloved Son, who came to give peace to the world. You, who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

*Child Jesus*



*Now you are invited to wrap the baby Jesus figurine in Christmas wrapping and to place him under the tree, to be opened as the first gift of Christmas.*

*Prayer Time at Home*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.  
(Luke 3:70-78)

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'



Music Suggestion for the  
'Pause for Thoughts'  
Come To Us  
by Greg Watson

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*Pause for Thought*

John the Baptist knew that his role was to bring people to Christ. This is our role too. We try to live our lives with honesty, compassion, and generosity so that people will be able to know that our faith in Jesus makes a difference in our everyday lives.

What actions of ours point the way to Jesus? What ways do you share your tunic or food with others, and how are we content with what God has given to us?

How might we joyfully give this Advent and Christmas?

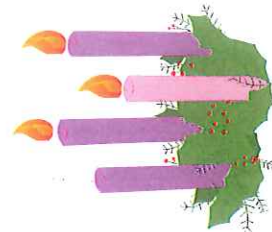


*A family member lights the third pink candle - the candle of joy.*

Today we light the third candle on our Advent wreath. The theme this week is joy. We are getting closer to celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour and the great joy he brings to our lives.

*Advent Litany*

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
You are light in our darkness. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Son of God, save us from our sins. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Son of Mary, deepen our love. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Bring hope into the lives of all people. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Give your peace to all nations. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Be the joy of all who love you. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Bring unity among all who believe in you. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Bless us as we gather here in your name. **Come, Lord Jesus.**  
Lord Jesus, stay with us always. **Come, Lord Jesus.**



Let us pray. May Christ give us his peace and joy and let us share them with others. All peace and glory are his for ever. Amen.  
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

God of joy, as we get closer to the celebration of the birth of your Son, we remain filled with joy. We know that life often presents us with challenges and that it is difficult to always be optimistic and cheerful. However, we know that you wish us to be a joy-filled people. Help us to focus on our blessings, to be appreciative of the many people who support us, and to be ever mindful of your constant presence. As we approach the celebration of Jesus' birth, may the peace and joy of the season fill our hearts.  
Amen.

*Praises of God - St Francis of Assisi*

You are holy, Lord, the only God and your deeds are wonderful. You are strong. You are great. You are the Most High, You are almighty. You holy Father, are King of heaven and earth. You are Three and One, Lord God, all good. You are Good, all Good, supreme Good, Lord God, Living and true. You are love, You are wisdom. You are humility, You are endurance. You are rest, You are peace. You are joy and gladness. You are justice and moderation. You are all our riches, And you suffice for us. You are beauty. You are gentleness. You are our protector, You are our guardian and defender. You are courage. You are our haven and our hope. You are faith, Our great consolation. You are our eternal life, Great and wonderful Lord, God almighty, Merciful Saviour.