

THIRD SUNDAY

OF *Advent*

**As the earth brings forth its plants,
and a garden makes its growth spring up,
so will the Lord God make justice and praise
spring up before all the nations.**

Isaiah 61:11



DECEMBER 17, 2017

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December 17, 2017

Third Sunday of Advent

Children who are poor make toys out of the unlikeliest things: milk cartons, nails, bottle caps, sticks, plastic bags, corn cobs, clothespins. Folks who have plenty consider these things trash—in fact, some poor children literally make their toys out of trash. Their abject need gives them a different perspective, seeing blessing where the rich see only waste.

Material poverty is a scourge on our planet, and we must never make excuses for it. We must work tirelessly for decent conditions for every human person. As we work, we can learn from the special perspective of our brothers and sisters who do not have enough to live. We can see how depending on others for resources can transform a rich person's trash into a poor child's treasure.



SPIRITUAL POVERTY

On this "Rejoice!" Sunday in Advent, we can pray in a particular way for an end to material poverty. Today's readings assure us that the kind of poverty God desires for us is spiritual poverty, a radical knowledge that all things come from God. Where material poverty can wound the human spirit, spiritual poverty cultivates boundless joy. John the Baptist provides a startling model for us. In all sincerity, he admits that he is not worthy to touch Jesus' sandals. John says this not to charm the crowds by being coy and self-deprecating. No, John embraces the truth that God is the source of all goodness. We are utterly dependent on God for all good things. We cannot do anything to earn God's favor; God simply provides for us because we need God. This is massively good news! No one could possibly care for us like God does. At our very best, we merely reflect God's brightness into the world. God's brilliant joy is exactly what we are called to. As Saint Paul says, "The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it."

Today's Readings: Is 61:1–2a, 10–11; Lk 1:46–48, 49–50, 53–54; 1 Thes 5:16–24;
Jn 1:6–8, 19–28

17 de diciembre de 2017

Tercer Domingo de Adviento

Hay niños pobres que ingeniosamente crean juguetes de los objetos menos imaginables, como cartones o garrafones de leche, clavos, tapas de botellas de jugo o de refrescos, bolsas de plástico, olores de maíz, pinzas de ropa. Por otro lado, hay algunas personas ricas que consideran esos objetos como basura; de hecho, algunos niños pobres literalmente hacen sus juguetes de la basura. Su necesidad les da una perspectiva diferente, ver una bendición donde los ricos solo ven basura.

La pobreza material es una plaga en el planeta, y nunca debemos hacer excusas sobre ella. Debemos trabajar incansablemente por condiciones decentes para cada persona. Al ir trabajando, podemos aprender desde la perspectiva de nuestros hermanos y hermanas que no tienen lo suficiente para vivir. Podemos ver como dependiendo de otras personas por recursos pude transformar la basura de una persona rica en un tesoro para un niño pobre.

POBREZA ESPIRITAL

En este Domingo de Adviento de "¡Regocijo!" Podemos rezar en una forma particular para terminar con la pobreza material. Las lecturas de hoy nos aseguran que el tipo de pobreza que Dios desea para nosotros es una pobreza espiritual, un conocimiento radical de que todas las cosas vienen de Dios. En donde la pobreza material pueda herir el espíritu humano, la pobreza espiritual cultiva alegría sin límites. Juan el Bautista nos proporciona un modelo atractivo. Con toda sinceridad, él admite que no es digno de desatar las sandalias de Jesús. Juan dice esto no para encantar a las multitudes siendo tímido y despreciándose a sí mismo. No, Juan abraza la verdad que Dios es el origen de toda la bondad. Dependemos absolutamente de Dios para todas las cosas. No hay algo que podamos hacer para ganar el favor de Dios; Dios simplemente nos provee porque necesitamos a Dios. ¡Esto es una noticia muy abundante! Nadie posiblemente podría cuidar de nosotros como Dios los hace. Lo mejor nuestro, simplemente es reflejar el brillo de Dios en el mundo. La brillante alegría de Dios es exactamente a lo que estamos llamados. Así como san Pablo dice: "el que los ha llamado es fiel y cumplirá su promesa".

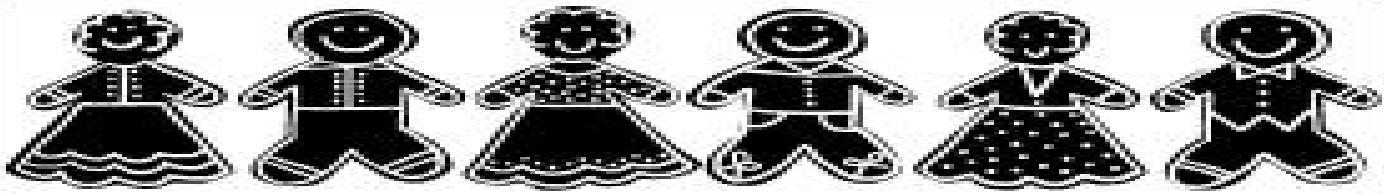
Lecturas de hoy: Is 61:1–2a, 10–11; Lc 1:46–48, 49–50, 53–54; 1 Tes 5:16–24;
Jn 1:6–8, 19–28

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Last week, we looked at a form of nativity scene called a presipio, characterized by framing the crèche of Jesus with a vast array of personalities and a rich geographical context. The tradition was carried to the New World, and finds very rich expression in Latin America today. While in Europe the presepio was reserved mostly to the homes of wealthy nobles and great churches, in Latin America it was claimed by the poor and expressed the skills of native artisans. In Mexico, you can still find clay figures in every village market. In a way, the native people took the religion of Spanish rule and baptized it with their Indian culture by surrounding the crib of Jesus with local geography and people. In Brazil, where Christmas falls in summer, the figure of the baby Jesus is wrapped in gold and gems, and set on a hillside surrounded by flowers and animals of all kinds. Sometimes there is a double presepio, presenting both Nativity and Crucifixion.

In some places in Latin America, even non-religious people take care to have a presepio in the home, sometimes dedicating one whole room in the house or apartment to the scene. Some cities have markets where people from the countryside sell plants and figurines. In Cuzco, churches and families provide hot chocolate for the children of the poor who come down to help create the nativity scenes. In Paraguay, the baby Jesus grows--the small infant who arrives on Christmas Eve is replaced at New Year with a toddler Jesus who holds in one hand the globe and in the other a cross. Few Christmas traditions have the vitality and variety of presepios and crèches honoring the Nativity.

--Rev. James Field, Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co.



TRADICIONES DE NUESTRA FE

El día 16 de diciembre comienza la Novena de Aguinaldos en Colombia y otras partes de Latinoamérica. La novena consiste en 9 partes que se repiten por 9 noches:

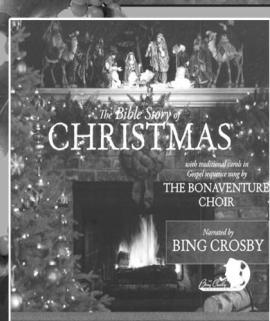
- 1- Oración inicial 4- Reflexión del día
- 2- Oración Mariana 5- Gozos
- 3- Oración de José 6- Oración al Niño Jesús
- 7- Un Salmo
- 8- Invocación final
- 9- Villancicos (cantos navideños)

Los participantes buscan aguinaldo (regalo). Para esto los colombianos tienen la costumbre de jugar "pajita en boca" buscando quien no trae una pajita en boca. La persona que no pueda mostrar que trae pajita en boca tiene que dar un regalo a quien lo descubrió. Los aguinaldos son recuerdo del regalo que nos dio Dios en su Hijo Jesús, prenda de su amor. Y si Dios nos da un aguinaldo tan grande es porque Dios no tiene pajita en boca cuando nos dice que nos ama.

En el corazón de la Novena está el refrán de Gozos:

Dulce Jesús mío / mi niño adorado
ven a nuestras almas / ven no tardes tanto.
Muy buen mensaje para el Adviento.

--Fray Gilberto Cavazos-Glz, OFM, Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.



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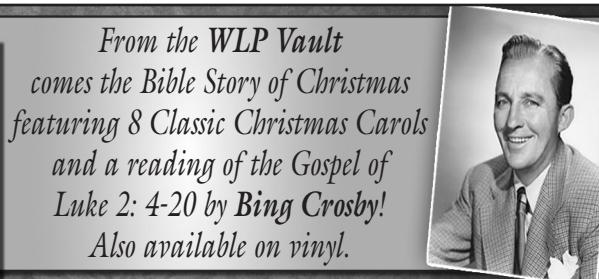
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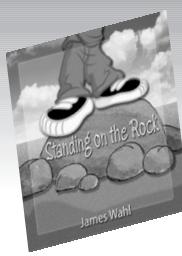
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