

**Thought for the week
3rd Sunday of Advent
12th December, 2021**

Loving God,
Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them,
you created us in your own image and
made us stewards of creation.
You blessed us with the sun, water and bountiful land
so that all might be nourished.

Open our minds and touch our hearts,
so that we may attend to your gift of creation
Help us to be conscious that our common home
belongs not only to us, but to all of your creatures
and to all future generations,
and that it is our responsibility to preserve it.
May we help each person secure the food and resources
that they need.

Be present to those in need in these trying times,
especially the poorest and those most at risk
of being left behind.
Transform our fear and feelings of isolation
into hope and fraternity
so that we may experience a true conversion of the heart.

Help us to show creative solidarity
in addressing the consequences of this global pandemic.
Make us courageous to embrace the changes
that are needed in search of the common good.
Now more than ever may we feel
that we are all interconnected and interdependent.
Enable us to listen and respond
to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.
May the present sufferings be the birth pangs
of a more fraternal and sustainable world.

Under the loving gaze of Mary Help of Christians,
we make this prayer through Christ Our Lord.
Amen.

*'Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again rejoice!'
'I want you to be happy in the Lord; I repeat what I want is your
happiness.'* (Phil 4:4)

Today is Gaudete Sunday (pronounced GOW-day-tay) the word derives from the Latin meaning rejoice. But the words that really matter are *'in the Lord'* for this is where we find true happiness. When Paul wrote this letter he had been captured and was in a dark, Roman prison without certainty that he would come out alive. His trust in the Lord was total and his happiness came in writing to his followers urging them to love God and be happy.

That message is as true today as it has ever been. The challenges facing the world are many and varied and they affect us all. Recently Pope Francis has spoken out strongly on many topics urging world leaders and everyone of our duty to all of humanity.

Regarding refugees: *'Let us stop this shipwreck of humanity'*;
On climate change: *'a renewed sense of responsibility for our world'*
On church reform: *'not to remain barricaded in our certainties'*.
Yet every message also centred on Paul's message.
Just recently on December 4th the Pope wrote on his twitter feed:

'This is the attitude of the true apostle: to go confidently forward, preferring the uncertainty of unexpected situations rather than force of habit. This courage is born from confident trust in God's greatness who loves to work through our lowliness.'

Today the pink candle on the Advent wreath will be lit. It will remind us that our faith in God can be a liberating force and does not need to hinder our freedom.

A Parishioner



We ask you to please pray for the following people who continue to ask for your prayers;

Please pray for Beth Selwood

Please pray for Mary Haggar

Please pray for Carmel Barker

Please pray for Vivien Kear (Krissie's friend) who has cancer

Please pray for Rita Lonsdale.

Maddy Sharman has asked for our prayers.

Vera Bird has asked for our prayers for her Great, Great Grandson Harry

Please pray for Cecilia Fung, the mother of Fr Jojo. She has had a stroke.

Prayers please for Antonita's nephew Peppin who has long covid.

Please pray for Caroline Mikhail (daughter - in - law of Jane and Ramsay Mikhail) who suffered a stroke.

Please pray for Peter Halter's sister Jean who has macular degeneration and for Jean's great grandson Rogan who is 9 and has leukemia. Rogan continues to need our prayers.

Please pray for the children and teachers of the Parish

Please pray for the residents and staff at the two nursing homes in our parish, Abbeycrest and St Luke's.

Please pray for all victims of the Coronavirus.



Please also remember in your prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time including;
Fr John Ellis, Mat and Chris Fagen and family,
Rita and Owen Walter, Sue Carey, Sophia Carikas,
Angela Fung. Sophia Graham, Stanislaus Rozdolski,
Anna Maria Dias, Margaret Skevington,
Paquita Wettenhall, Albert Eeckelaers,
Lesley Farquhar, Margaret Hall, Reg Adams,
Mr Wojciech Motyka, Simon Barrow, Bill Condon,
Alfred May