



## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is the Latin word meaning “rejoice.” This Sunday is so named because “Rejoice” is the first word in the entrance antiphon for today's Mass taken from Philippians 4:4-5: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near.” Today we light the third candle of the Advent wreath. The rose colored candle is lit on the Third Sunday of the Advent season. This Sunday is a joyful reminder that our salvation is near.

The Advent season is a season of hope and joy. Four weeks of Advent provide us with the time to pray for Jesus’ birth. Jesus - the Savior of the world and the Prince of Peace. May our Advent routine of taking time for prayer each day, returning to the sacrament of reconciliation, spiritual reading, spending time in Eucharistic adoration, participating in devotions of the Church, and even Christmas shopping (or ordering online...), bring peace and joy to our families, our friends, and our hearts.

As we approach the Christmas season, may we prayerfully and determinedly make sure that we keep “Christ in Christmas”. I was speaking with a crafter – who brings her handmade and embroidered items to craft shows across the Archdiocese. She shared with me that when she was selling her wares in the western suburbs, one of her most popular items were towels embroidered with “Merry Christmas”. She shared with me her surprise that when at a show in the northern suburbs, the “Merry Christmas” towels were not as popular. She was surprised that her “Merry and Bright” towels were more popular. Her comments gave me occasion for pause and the writing of this article.

Merry  
Christmas

OR

Merry  
and  
Bright

As we come together this Gaudete Sunday, sharing in the Eucharist, preparing for the birth of Jesus who will be “bread for the world”, what are the ordinary and simple things we can do to make sure that we “keep Christ in Christmas”?

This Sunday you are invited to come and participate in the first annual Do-it-Yourself Handel’s Messiah at St. Mary’s. Purchase tickets through the following link: [www.eventbrite.com/](http://www.eventbrite.com/) (please search for Niles Metropolitan Chorus). The celebration and performance will begin at 3:00pm sharp. Please come and arrive early, find a pew with a neighbor, co-worker, or parishioner and be ready to have your heart and spirit filled with joy on Gaudete Sunday. Thanks to Marek Rachelski for his efforts to bring this to our parish this Advent.

We will be offering the full schedule of Christmas Masses this year. May God bless all of us with health so we can come together celebrating Christmas Mass at St. Mary’s before celebrating in our homes with loved ones. If you are staying home this Christmas, I pray you will be able to join your fellow parishioners as we worship on Christmas day.

Fr. Mike Maciej