

3rd Sunday of Advent

The sun rises in the East. The darkness recedes and there is light. We start to see clearly. Light has the lovely effect of making us feel safe. “Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion. Sing joyfully, O Israel. Be glad and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord has removed the judgment against you; he has turned away your enemies.” That is something to celebrate. When the judgment is lifted and our enemies are scattered we are able to relax again. We can relax and take a second breath. Paul is full of rejoicing in his letter today: “Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice!” We are invited to rejoice because the Messiah is coming and we can almost feel it. This is an exciting time because liberation is coming. The sentence of death is about to finish and we are about to be set free. We identify with the confusion. “Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ.” John is merely the messenger. He is the signpost pointing the way for us. Which way should we be looking? John says, look this way. We turn to the East and the lovely dawn that approaches. We can feel the heat of the sun. We haven’t experienced that for a very long time. The Messiah is coming. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Consider Baptism as a complete covering. We are to bathe ourselves in the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is all consuming and it is lovely. John the Baptist preached good news to the people. In case your loved ones are deaf, of course they are, maybe you should give them a nudge. Tell them what is happening. Announce the Good News. This great event is happening and they are going to miss it. Turn off the headphones. Turn off the smartphones and the tablets and all that nonsense. Can we just focus for a moment? Can we take stock of what is happening. We have been living in fear of Isis and all the others. We have lived with danger for so long we don’t know what peace of mind looks like. We spend our days counting time waiting for “them” to burst in our doors and take us away. That’s not going to happen. We are not at the mercy of it all. We have the Messiah and He comes to save us.

With love, Fr. Pat