

Third Sunday of Advent 2021

THE JOURNEY ONWARDS ...

God, will rejoice over you ...
and renew you with his love

F A I T H

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FROM THE READINGS

The Lord, your God ... will rejoice over you with gladness,
and renew you in his love *Zephaniah 3:17*

Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice!
Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near.

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding
will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. *Philippians 4:4-7*

The crowds asked John the Baptist, "What should we do?"

He said to them in reply, "Whoever has two cloaks
should share with the person who has none.

And whoever has food should do likewise." *Luke 3:10-11*

THE JOURNEY

Martin Sheen plays the main character in the movie, 'The Way'. He is an eye doctor who carries the ashes of his son with him on the Camino de Santiago as his son died while attempting this journey. Martin Sheen reflects on what happens on 'The Way': "Each step is a prayer when you're out there. You generally start out with a lot of stuff because you want to be prepared for whatever happens. As you go, you begin to have confidence and you begin to realise you over packed, and you begin to disperse all the stuff," Sheen says. "The real pilgrimage begins on the inside, and you begin to let go of all the things you've been holding on to in the dungeon of your heart. You begin to let that one go that you couldn't forgive. You begin to stop being judgemental, and envious, and angry, and selfish, and resentful, and all the dark parts of our spirit begin to be released." (*Martin Sheen, 'Spiritual Revelations in The Way'*)

The readings for the Third Sunday of Advent 2021, Gaudete ('Joy' or 'Rejoice') Sunday, are full of encouragement because 'the Lord is near'. There is rejoicing as we journey onwards with trust, kindness, prayer, petition, thanksgiving and generous care for those who lack life's necessities.

FROM FELLOW TRAVELLERS



**Dear God
be with me**

as I walk your paths,
in places I sometimes
do not want to go.

Be with me
as I say goodbye
to those I want
to stay with.

Be with me
as I leave the gift
so newly given and
hardly seen.

Be with me, Lord,
as I try, sometimes badly,
to walk
your way. *Edvina Gateley*

There is plenty to do for each one of us,
working in our own hearts,
changing our own attitudes, in our neighbourhoods –
'Love is indeed a harsh and dreadful thing' to ask of us, of each of us,
but it is the only answer. *Dorothy Day.*

FOR THINKING AND PRAYING

- What words or phrases stand out for you in these readings and insights from 'a fellow traveller'?
- What insights might you take with you on your own journey?

A PRAYER

Come, Advent God,
and complete the special work of love
which you began in Jesus of Nazareth.

Many are cast down with spiritual needs,
thirsting for the peace of your forgiveness
and the warmth of your healing love.
Come to them with the grace they desperately need.
At evening or midnight, morning or midday,
Come, Lord Jesus.

Many are in despair through physical hardship,
and worries about their health and livelihoods,
anxieties about the future,
seeking relief from their burdens
and hope in the midst of their cares.
Come to them with the help they desperately need.
At evening or midnight, morning or midday,
Come, Lord Jesus.

Many have minds and souls filled with hatred,
lives shackled by prejudice and terrible obsession,
in many countries of the world and in our own Australia.
Come to them with the conversion they so desperately need.
At evening or midnight, morning or midday,
Come, Lord Jesus. *Bruce Prewer*



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Acknowledgements: 'Spiritual Revelations in The Way' quoting Martin Sheen at <https://www1.cbn.com/movies/emilio-estevez-and-martin-sheen-faith-the-way>; Henri Nouwen, 'We are on a journey' <https://henrinouwen.org/meditation/we-are-on-a-journey/>; 'Dear God, Be With Me' by Edwina Gateley, in 'Encountering God ... the experience of the Mystics: Edwina Gateley in Search and You Will Find: Prayers, Reflections and Readings, Michael Brundell O'Carroll, Chris Christensen and Peter Gagen, Archdiocese of Brisbane Faith Education Services: 1998, 57; 'There is Plenty to Do ...' Dorothy Day, in *My Journey, My Prayer*, Center for Learning, Villa Maria Pennsylvania USA: 1977, 29; Prayer 'Come Advent God' Part I by Bruce Prewer, *Australian Prayers* 4th Edn, Westview: Kingston Springs USA:1983,2002, 38.