

# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## Rejoicing in the Lord

Gracious and loving God,  
you are the source of all hope,  
Embed your grace into our hard hearts,  
and guide us to rejoice on this day.  
Help us to do your will  
as we repent of our willful ways.  
May our deaf ears hear  
the wisdom of Scripture  
as we joyfully await the Lord's coming.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Sunday, December 14, 2025**

**Be Strong, Fear Not**



*Today's readings: Isaiah 35:1–6a; Psalm 146:6–7, 8–9, 9–10; James 5:7–10; Matthew 11:2–11.* From the rose vestment the priest may wear, to the depiction of joy in the prayers and readings, the Advent theme of rejoicing permeates the liturgy on the Third Sunday of Advent. The day is called *Gaudete Sunday*, “gaudete” coming from the Latin word *gaudere*, “to rejoice.” We hear the word *rejoice* in the entrance antiphon: “Rejoice in the Lord always,” and the word *joy* in the collect, or opening prayer. The reading from Isaiah portrays this joy, telling of the desert and the parched land rejoicing and a time when the eyes of the blind will be opened, the lame will leap, and the mute will sing.

Isaiah predicts salvation and God’s victory over sickness and evil. Our “Thanks be to God” after the first reading should be emphatic, because wonderful things await us. Psalm 146 offers praise and hope as it tells how the Lord sets captives free, protects strangers, and thwarts the wicked. At this halfway point in Advent, the Letter of St. James tells us to be patient “until the coming of the Lord.”

For your Advent prayer this week, reflect on the reading from St. James, reading it in the morning or before a meal. St. James tells us not to judge another and to look to the prophets as an example of hardship and patience. The Scripture will help you center on the meaning of Advent.