



YEAR A: MATTHEW 11:2-11



PREPARE JOYFULLY!

The Third Sunday of Advent is *Gaudete Sunday* - we light a pink candle as a symbol of joy!

CHECK OUT THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SAYS ABOUT THE SOURCE OF JOY CCC 1423-1424

NAME A PERSON OR A PLACE THAT BRINGS A SMILE TO YOUR FACE WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THEM / IT?

DO YOU THINK A PERSON CAN DECIDE TO BE JOYFUL, EVEN IF LIFE IS TOUGH? EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER

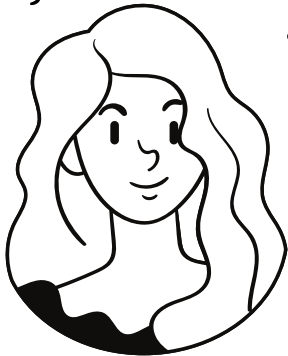
JOY

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ, "ADVENT: MORE THAN A CHOCOLATE CALENDAR" (ASCENSION PRESENTS) AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



- Advent is a penitential season like Lent: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE
- Advent is a season of d_____ and j_____ preparation for the coming of Jesus.
- How does Fr Mike define "devout"? _____

JOY VS HAPPINESS



- Happiness often comes out of our _____, when things are _____.
- Joy is the ability to have a certain happiness _____ of your circumstances.
- Joy is an abiding sense of _____.
- Joy comes from knowing that the Father _____ me and He knows my _____.

- Joy is a **choice**! We can choose to live with an abiding sense of the Father's love. Our circumstances can be awful and we can still be _____.

CHRIST'S MAJOR ARRIVALS

- His Past Coming at the original C_____.
- His future coming at the End of T_____.



WHAT DO SAINTS DESCRIBE AS THE INTERMEDIARY ARRIVAL OF CHRIST?



The arrival of Christ into our _____. This can happen when we open our hearts to His _____, whenever we _____ in His name, when we are in the presence of the _____.



WHAT'S THE GOAL OF ADVENT?



The goal of Advent is not to have a merry Christmas. The goal is to worship him well, celebrate the fact He came into this world, AND to prepare for His _____

Question: If Advent is the whole-hearted and joyful preparation for the coming of Jesus into our lives.... if Jesus showed up in your life today, would there be any room for Him? Take a moment to think about today's schedule. Is there room there for Jesus?

PREPARE JOYFULLY!

[MATTHEW 11:2-11](#)



Should we party during Advent? Limited amounts of Christmas parties, music and food can help us enter into the Christmas mood, but we need to be able to say no.

Why is being able to say "no" important? What does it make room for in Advent?

IF I CAN LEARN TO SAY "NO" MORE TO MATERIAL THINGS, I CAN LEARN TO SAY "YES" MORE TO JESUS.



Now Read Matthew 11:2-11



How are your Christmas preparations going for you? Shopping done? Outfits planned? Events in the diary? Decorations up? Or is it all still a muddle? Does it even feel like you're approaching Christmas yet? Sometimes it all gets so busy doesn't it, and other things like exams and visits and more mundane jobs get in the way of excitement and joy. Maybe it's even stressful, or a lonely time of year for you if you have lost someone you dearly loved.

Today is Gaudete Sunday, the Sunday we're called to pause and reflect on joy in the Advent season - because Christmas is the season of Joy: Joy Incarnate was born at Christmas time, and that's a good thing to remember in the midst of a dark and dreary month of December! It's a hard thing to remember though when we see so much suffering around us in our own communities and in the world at large. But today we can hit the pause button and take a good look around us to choose to find the joy! In today's Gospel Jesus asked John the Baptist's disciples to look for signs of His Kingdom - to see the Good News already present through His actions. We can do the same thing in our own world. Make a conscious effort this week to notice goodness and kindness around you, and to bring that joy to others too! Make your heart a joyful place for Jesus this Christmas time.



MISSION!



MAKE A DECISION TODAY TO LIVE ADVENT JOYFULLY AND PREPARING TO WELCOME JESUS. USE OUR DAILY ADVENT CALENDAR ON INSTAGRAM TO HELP YOU IF YOU NEED SOME IDEAS.

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR DAILY SCHEDULE. WHERE CAN YOU FIT FIVE TO TEN MINUTES IN EACH DAY FOR PRAYER? CAN YOU SET YOUR ALARM TO GO OFF EARLIER? CAN YOU CUT OUT A FEW MINUTES OF TV / GAMING / MUSIC? DECIDE FOR WHOLE-HEARTED JOYFUL PREPARATION - IF YOU DON'T DECIDE, IT WON'T HAPPEN!



WHAT COULD I SAY NO TO THIS WEEK TO MAKE MORE ROOM FOR CHRIST?

PRAYER TIME!

PRAYER FOR JOY:

My God, You know me by name and You love me, with an eternal love that never fades. Show me how to base my joy on You, because in You my joy will be complete, no matter what circumstances come my way. You delight in me - help me to truly believe that! Amen



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON JOYFUL PREPARATION



- [Make Room \(Casting Crowns\)](#)
- [The Earth Stood Still \(Future of Forestry\)](#)
- [Unspeakable Joy \(Chris Tomlin\)](#)
- [O Come, O Come Emmanuel \(David Crowder Band\)](#)
- [When Hope Came Down \(Kari Jobe\)](#)
- [Awake O Sleeper \(Ike Ndolo\)](#)
- [Hearts Waiting \(Matt Redman\)](#)
- [God Made Low \(Sovereign Grace\)](#)



CHECK OUT OUR ASCEND DAILY INSTAGRAM POSTS FOR IDEAS ON HOW TO CELEBRATE ADVENT THIS YEAR!

7:46 MINS



Why Joy is More Christian than Happiness (Fr Mike Schmitz)

4:31 MINS



[JOY \(The Bible Project\)](#)