



**The Catholic church of St Mary, Leek
10 – 11 December, 2022
Third Sunday of Advent:
Gaudate Sunday; Bambinelli Sunday**

An introduction to the Third Sunday of Advent

This is the Third Sunday of Advent and is sometimes known by its traditional title, Gaudete Sunday. The Latin word, “Gaudete” is taken from the first word of the Entrance Antiphon for today’s Mass meaning, “Rejoice” (see Phil 4:4-5) ; the title of Nuptial Mass and Requiem Mass is given in a similar way.

The rejoicing of this day expresses the Church’s joy that Christmas and the celebration of the Lord’s birth is approaching. To mark the unique character of this Third Sunday of Advent, the vestments worn by the priest may be rose coloured; this is one of only two days in the Church’s calendar when this can take place; the third candle on the Advent wreath is lit; and, music and flowers can be more

festive, but not as to distract from the importance of Christmas.

The character of the Advent Season changes again between 17 – 24 December. The Gospel reading at daily Mass is taken from the first chapter of either Matthew’s Gospel or Luke’s Gospel and so helps the whole Church to make their own immediate spiritual preparations for Christmas.

Today is also known as Bambinelli Sunday. Originally a custom of Popes to bless the Baby Jesus from Christmas Nativity Scenes, it has now spread to all parts of the Church. During today’s Masses, your Bambinelli will be blessed at the conclusion of the Bidding Prayers.

Penitential act

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Priest May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

People Amen.

Priest Lord, have mercy.

People Lord, have mercy.

Priest Christ, have mercy.

People Christ, have mercy.

Priest Lord, have mercy.

People Lord, have mercy.

First reading **Isaiah 35:1-6,10** **God himself is coming to save you**

Let the wilderness and the dry-lands exult, let the wasteland rejoice and bloom, let it bring forth flowers like the jonquil, let it rejoice and sing for joy. The glory of Lebanon is bestowed on it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. Strengthen all weary hands, steady all trembling knees and say to all faint hearts, ‘Courage! Do not be afraid. ‘Look, your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you.’ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy for those the Lord has ransomed shall return. They will come to Zion shouting for joy, everlasting joy on their faces; joy and gladness will go with them and sorrow and lament be ended.

Responsorial Psalm **Ps 145(146):6-10**

Our response to the Psalm is: Come, Lord, and save us.

Come, Lord, and save us.

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord, who sets prisoners free,
Come, Lord, and save us.

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger and upholds the widow and orphan.
Come, Lord, and save us.

It is the Lord who loves the just but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever, Zion's God, from age to age.
Come, Lord, and save us.

Second reading James 5:7-10 Do not lose heart; the Lord's coming will be soon

Be patient, brothers, until the Lord's coming. Think of a farmer: how patiently he waits for the precious fruit of the ground until it has had the autumn rains and the spring rains! You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, brothers, so as not to be brought to judgement yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates. For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor. Alleluia!

Gospel Matthew 11:2-11 'A greater than John the Baptist has never been seen'

John in his prison had heard what Christ was doing and he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?' Jesus answered, 'Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind see again, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised to life and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor; and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'

As the messengers were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the people about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man wearing fine clothes? Oh no, those who wear fine clothes are to be found in palaces. Then what did you go out for? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says:

'Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;
he will prepare your way before you.

'I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.