

3rd Week of Advent – Gaudatte Sunday

Its Gaudatte Sunday – REJOICE – Joy Sunday – Christmas is almost here REJOICE

I want to share with you something I have learned about joy.

Just about a month ago my mother died

When I heard the news what came to me was the scripture verse:

“I rejoice when I heard them say let us go to the house of the Lord”

My mother had died and my response was joy!

Finally, after a long illness, she'd gone home to the Lord

Now – not everyone in my family had that reaction

Tears – Sadness – Sorrow – Grief

All very real and very valid emotions at a time like this

A friend of mine was telling me about a book she had read about joy

It said that life was like a set of railroad tracks

There are two rails, side by side, but if you look off to the horizon its as if they merge become 1

In our life we will have sadness and sorrow

In our life we will have joy

Both can be part of our lives – side by side – and in time they're together in us as 1

As we live our lives we can choose – to focus on joy – or to focus on sorrow

When my mother died I focused on JOY – others focused on sorrow

WHY?

The reason I could focus on joy is JESUS

“I rejoice when I heard them say, let us go to the house of the Lord”

Why is that possible? – JESUS

John the Baptist is in jail – an opportunity for sorrow

BUT – Jesus, are you the one?

“Look around, what do you see – lame walk, blind see, deaf hear, good new is proclaimed”

The Kingdom of God is at hand – because of Jesus – REJOICE

We are a post-resurrection people – we know about Bethlehem, and Calvary, and the empty tomb

The Kingdom of God is NOT at hand

The Kingdom of God is here – we get to repent and be forgiven – because of Jesus

JOY

Welcome to Gaudatte Sunday – we are about to proclaim what we believe in the Creed – JOY

we are going to receive the body and blood – JOY

we are God's beloved – forgiven and redeemed – JOY

“I rejoiced when I heard them say let us go to the house of the Lord” – here we are – REJOICE