



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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Angelus: share the joy of the arrival of the Redeemer

At midday Pope Francis appeared at the window of his study to pray the Angelus with the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square. The third Sunday of Advent, as the Holy Father mentioned, is characterised by St. Paul's invitation: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice ... The Lord is at hand". "It is not a superficial joy

Today we celebrate the third Sunday of Advent, marked by St. Paul's invitation: "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near". It is not a superficial or purely emotional joy that the Apostle exhorts us to", observed the Pope. "It is not worldly, nor is it the joy of consumerism. ... It is a more authentic joy, whose flavour we are called to rediscover. The flavour of true joy. It is a joy that touches the intimacy of our being, as we await Jesus, who has already come to bring salvation to the world. ... The liturgy of the Word offers us the right context for understanding and living this joy. Isaiah speaks of the desert, the parched land, the steppe; the prophet has before him feeble hands, weak knees, frightened hearts, the blind, the deaf and the mute. It is the picture of a desolate situation, of the inexorable destination without God.

"But finally, salvation is proclaimed: 'Be strong, fear not!', says the prophet. Here is your God ... He comes to save you. And immediately, everything is transformed: The desert blooms, joy and gladness fill hearts. These signs announced by Isaiah as revelations of a salvation already present, are fulfilled in Jesus. He Himself affirms this, responding to the messengers sent by John the Baptist: 'The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised'. They are not words, they are facts that show how the salvation brought by Jesus grips every human being and regenerates him. God has entered into history to liberate us from the slavery of sin; He has set up His dwelling in our midst to share our existence, to heal our scars, to dress our wounds and to give us new life. Joy is the fruit of this intervention of salvation and of the love of God".

"We are called to participate in this sentiment of jubilation, this jubilation, this joy", Francis affirmed. "A Christian who is not joyful ... is missing something ... or he is not a Christian. The joy of the heart, the joy within that drives us forward and gives us courage. The Lord comes, He comes into our lives ... to free us from all interior and exterior slaveries. He shows us the path of fidelity, of patience and of perseverance, because, upon His return, our joy will be complete. Christmas is near. The signs of its coming are evident on our streets and in our homes; here too, in the Square, the Nativity scene has been set up, and alongside it, the tree. These external signs invite us to welcome the Lord, Who always comes and knocks at our door; He calls to our heart to come

close to us. He invites us to recognize his steps among those of our brothers and sisters who pass by, especially the weakest and most in need”.

“Today we are invited to be joyful for the imminent arrival of our Redeemer”, concluded the Holy Father, “and we are called to share this joy with others, giving consolation and hope to the poor, to the sick, to those who are alone or unhappy. May the Virgin Mary, the ‘handmaid of the Lord’, help us hear the voice of God in prayer and serve him with compassion in our brothers, to ready ourselves for the arrival of Christmas, preparing our hearts to welcome Jesus”.
