

## Third Sunday in Advent

### **The Advent Seasonal Collect:**

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### **The Sunday Collect:**

O Lord Jesus Christ, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise make ready your way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient toward the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world, we may be found a people acceptable in your sight; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**First Lesson:    Isaiah 65:17-25**

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness.

I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.

No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.

They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their descendants with them.

Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food.

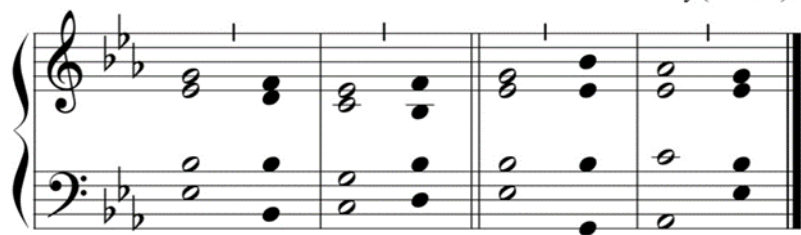
They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

*Reader:*                The Word of the Lord.

*People:*                Thanks be to God.

## Psalm 126:1-7 (Prayer for the restoration of joy)

Robert Knox Kennedy (b. 1945)



© 1979. Robert Knox Kennedy

- 1 When the Lord overturned the captivity of / Zion, |  
then we were like those who / dream. ||
  - 2 Then was our mouth filled with / laughter |  
and our tongue with shouts of / joy. ††
  - 3 Then they said among the / nations, |  
“The Lord has done great things for / them.” ||
  - 4 Indeed, the Lord has done great things for us al / ready, |  
whereof we re / joice. ††
  - 5 Overturn our captivity, O / Lord, |  
as when streams refresh the deserts of the / south. ||
  - 6 Those who sow in / tears |  
shall reap with songs of / joy. ††
- (repeat second half of chant)*
- 7 He who goes on his way weeping and bears good / seed |  
shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves / with him. ††
- Glory be to the Father, and to the / Son |  
And to the Holy / Spirit ||  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever / shall be, |  
World without end, A / men. ††

## Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Brothers, pray for us. Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

*Reader:*               The Word of the Lord.

*People:*                Thanks be to God.

*Deacon:* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

*People:* Glory to You, Lord Christ.

### **The Gospel: John 3:22-30**

After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized (for John had not yet been put in prison).

Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification. And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness — look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him."

John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.'

The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. He must increase, but I must decrease."

*Deacon:* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People:* Praise to you, Lord Christ