

### Introduction:

On this Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday), the Church invites us to rejoice, even if life still carries burdens, anxieties and waiting; for God has not forgotten us. Yet very often, we struggle to recognize the signs of God's presence - especially when our hopes seem delayed, our prayers unanswered, or suffering weighs heavily on us. Today, as we prepare to meet the Lord in this Eucharist, let us first acknowledge the moments when doubt, frustration, and impatience have overshadowed our faith. Let us open our hearts to His mercy, so that our joy may truly be complete.

**First Reading** : Isaiah 35:1-6, 10  
**Responsorial Psalm** : Psalm 146: 7, 8-9a, 10  
**Second Reading** : James 5:7-10  
**Gospel** : Mathew 11: 2-11

### Prayers of the Faithful

**Celebrant:** With joyful hope in God who saves and restores, we place our petitions before Him. Our response is: *Hear our prayer, O Lord*

For Pope Leo, our Bishops, Priests and Religious – that they may guide us to recognize God's saving presence even in difficult and uncertain times ...*(brief silent pause)*... we pray to the Lord.

For leaders of nations – that they may be instruments of reconciliation, ensuring safety, dignity, and hope, especially for those suffering in regions torn by war and unrest ...*(brief silent pause)*... we pray to the Lord.

For those broken and discouraged by sickness, poverty, unemployment, addiction or loneliness – that the Lord may surround them with people who bring them His compassion, healing and renewed joy ...*(brief silent pause)*... we pray to the Lord.

For our families and parish community – that we may grow in patience and understanding, and rejoice at recognising God's presence in our homes and relationships ...*(brief silent pause)*... we pray to the Lord.

For our personal intentions and for those who have asked for our prayers ... *(longer silent pause)*... we pray to the Lord.

**Celebrant:** Eternal Father, as we joyfully await the coming of Your Son, strengthen our faith, renew our hope, and help us to live as witnesses of Your saving love. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.