

THIRD  
SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT



*Allowing  
His Mystery  
To Shine Through*

Having reached the halfway point on our journey toward Christmas, we now celebrate the day on which we view every event from the perspective of joy. But if hope does not shine through that joy, then it is sterile folly. “Rejoice!” This exhortation is an important part of the “content” of today’s happy announcement since true joy cannot be manifested without allowing the beauty of God to shine through. The divine movement starts from a relationship among the three Persons of the Trinity, which then expands to an encounter with human beings so that what would be humanly incomprehensible can be known, at least in part.

In this movement toward transparency, we find the remedy for three attitudes from which we must free ourselves: *opacity*, *reflection* and *sadness*.

*Opacity* does not allow light to filter through words and looks; it transmits sadness and distrust instead of joy and courage. Opacity blocks the light: it is like a dirty window that does not permit a person to see either in or out. Opacity neutralizes light and hope; transparency, instead, does not block anything but points to the Lord.

*Reflection* comes about when we falsely believe that we are the only ones who possess the truth and make ourselves a “mirror” for everyone who crosses our path, as if it were we—not God—who reveals a person to him/herself. Reflection confirms the false self-image of the individual who is the victim of our merciless gaze. Transparency, instead, points a person to God, to eternity.

And finally, *sadness* is a true illness of the spirit because it is rooted in despair; it is a lack of hope. A Christian knows that even in the most difficult trials of life hope can transform every sorrow into joy since it enables us to glimpse the meaning of everything, allowing the mystery of God and his providence to shine through.

*Fr. Renato Tarantelli Baccari*



**Prayer**

*Lord, you allow yourself to be found by those who seek you.  
You allow yourself to be known by every human being.  
You remove all the obstacles that prevent us from meeting you.  
Give us the humility to let your love shine through us.*