



GIVE the Best of Yourself

**Whoever has
two cloaks should
share with the person
who has none**

(Lk. 3:11)

Perhaps you too have tried to find the nicest gift possible for a person who is particularly close to your heart: a special, unique, original gift—in short, one that is worthy of the situation and that above all will be appreciated by the receiver. To offer someone a welcome gift means that in some way we know the preferences and desires of that person and, at the same time, that we are ready to give him/her something of ourselves.

On this Third Sunday of Advent, also known as Gaudete Sunday (Sunday of Joy), the evangelist Luke invites us to make a very special gift, namely, a cloak—yes, I said a cloak!—to everyone we meet on our path. This cloak cannot be purchased in any shop in the world because only the heart possesses the “thread” needed to fashion it. To understand this better, let me tell you a story: the first “clothes” ever worn by human beings consisted of fig leaves (cf. Gn. 3:7). It is too bad that those loincloths were simply defensive covering—the result of shame, disobedience, fear and concealment. Then God stepped in and took matters into his own hands. Out of love, he fashioned leather garments to protect his fragile creatures. God was the first one to live the call of Advent: “Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none.”

But the word cloak veils another mystery that the Bible wants to reveal to us today. When the Book of Genesis (3:21) speaks about “leather garments,” it is making a play on words. The teachers of Israel tell us that words that resemble each other ignite new sparks of meaning. Now, the word “leather” in the Hebrew Bible is *’ôr*. But there is another very similar word with the same pronunciation in the Hebrew vocabulary, namely: *’ôr*, which means “light.” From leather to light: the step from one to the other is not short, but it is possible. To give a cloak to a person who does not have one means **to give the best of oneself** to that individual, that is, to give him/her a light that only God can kindle....

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Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord, my God, you are great indeed!
You are clothed with majesty and glory,
robed in light as with a cloak.

(Psalm 104:1-2)

I Advent

LET
your heart fly!

II Advent

LISTEN
to his word

III Advent

**GIVE
the best
of yourself**

IV Advent

RACE
along
the paths
of the world