

## Homily Rerun: December 11, 2016 - Father Bill



### Let Us Rejoice Sunday of the Rose Vestments Which Actually Look Pink (But they only look pink, they actually are rose!) (Fr. Bill)

Our 2016 Advent theme is, 'We Wait in Joyful Hope.' Each week we consider 'How do we do this?' The 1st week St Paul told us, "Throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ... put on the Lord Jesus Christ." The 2nd Week Isaiah told us "His delight shall be the fear of the Lord." This week: a.) Isaiah instructs us, "Be strong, fear not! Here is Your God, ... He comes to save you." b.) St James instructs us, "Do not complain, brothers and sisters, about one another," [Can you imagine how great family life would be if we put this instruction into practice in our homes beginning with husband and wife?] and c.) Jesus instructs us, "Blessed is the one who takes no offense at Me." [I tend to take offense at God when He tells me something I don't want to hear.]

However, today's liturgy offers more than just the teaching of Scripture; indeed the Scriptures were chosen to reflect today's liturgy for Gaudete Sunday – Let Us Rejoice Sunday. The rose colored vestments provide a bright and festive backdrop for this special Sunday of joy. Mass is packed full of instructions on "how to wait in joyful hope." So today the answer I offer as to how do we wait in joyful hope is: Pay Attention At Mass!

What does Mass tell us about waiting in joyful hope? (I will mention only the most obvious highlights.)

***"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."***

We pray under the sign of the cross, the sign of the victory of God's love in Jesus Christ, and in the name of the Holy Trinity starting with 'the Father.' Do you believe that which you amen? If not why do you amen it?

***"The Lord be with you."*** (repeated throughout Mass right up to the end) This is the priest in the name of the Church praying for you. I mean it each time I say it.

***"Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and just."*** For what is it right and just to thank God?

***"Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts."*** This is the song/praise of the saints and angels in Heaven described in Isaiah and in Revelation. They are with us, shoulder to shoulder as we pray their prayer.

***"Heaven and earth are full of Your glory."*** Do you believe this earth is full of the 'glory of God?' See it in sunsets, mountains and valleys, storms on the ocean. Learn it from little children.

***"Hosanna in the highest."*** The Hebrew 'Hosanna' combines 'yasha' meaning "save," and 'na' meaning "I pray" or "I beseech" or "please," making 'yasha na' meaning "O, save!" or "Please save!" Hosanna was proclaimed by the priests as they processed with willow branches around the altar of burnt offering for the Feast of Tabernacles. Over the centuries the people believed that they were indeed saved by God's mercy and 'hosanna' became less a plea and more a proclamation of joyful hope in which all the people joined. With this word the crowd welcomed Messiah that first Palm Sunday as he entered Jerusalem. With this word God welcomes us from the chambers of worship on earth into the chambers of the 'Lamb that was slain and yet lives' in Heaven.

***"At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say: Our Father ..."*** A small child who had been paying attention at Mass asked me, "Why do we dare to say!" Can you answer that child? Do you understand how unbelievably daring it is to call God, 'Father'!

***"Behold the Lamb of God."*** Not a king or president. Not a star of music of sports or theater. But the Lamb of God, the 'Lamb that was slain and yet lives'!

These are only things we say at every Mass. I did not mention any of the prayers of the day, the preface, the Scriptures of the day, or the Eucharistic prayer. Indeed the Mass teaches us how to wait in joyful hope.

The pinnacle: ***"The Body of Christ. Amen."*** The risen Jesus Christ in the fullness of His being, Body & Blood, Soul & Divinity; and you 'Amen' His presence under the appearance of bread and wine.

So, if you really want to know how to wait in joyful hope: Pay attention at Mass! The Mass will teach you everything you need to know, everything there is to know, about how to wait/live in joyful hope in every circumstance of every day of your life.