

SUNDAY Plus

3rd Sunday of Advent **Divine Office Week III** Year A

Teach me your ways

Teach me your way of looking at people:
as you glanced at Peter after his denial,
as you penetrated the fears of the rich young man
and the hearts of your disciples.

I would like to meet you as you really are,
since your image changes those with whom
you come into contact.

Remember John the Baptist's first meeting with you?
And the centurion's feeling of unworthiness?
And the amazement of all those who saw miracles
and other wonders?

How you impressed your disciples,
the rabble in the Garden of Olives,
Pilate and his wife
and the centurion at the foot of the cross...

I would like to hear and be impressed
by your manner of speaking,
listening, for example, to your discourse
in the synagogue in Capharnaum
or the Sermon on the Mount where your audience
felt you "taught as one who has authority."

Pedro Arrupe SJ, Hearts on Fire: praying with Jesuits

I am an Augustinian, a son of St Augustine, who once said, "With you I am a Christian, and for you I am a bishop." In this sense, all of us can journey together toward the homeland that God has prepared for us.

Pope Leo

Christmas tree legends

Legend says that one Christmas Eve, in a forest in Germany, a poor forester and his family huddled by their log fire, trying to stay warm. A small boy, bitterly cold, alone and lost, knocked at their front door. There was very little to spare, but the family made space beside the fire as the child gulped down a bowl of hot broth. Soon it was bedtime. Very early next morning, Christmas Day, singing angels woke the family from their sleep. They then

discovered that their young visitor was the Boy Jesus. In thanks for their hospitality, Jesus gave the forester and his family a freshly cut branch from a fir tree – and thus began the custom of having a Christmas tree in the home.

Another legend tells that the Boy Jesus found a poor family who could not afford to decorate their Christmas tree. He solved their problem by taking some spiders' webs and changing them into silver thread – the first tinsel.



Jesus at the Sermon on the Mount by August Müller (1923). Renata Sedmakova / Shutterstock.com

Loving Lord, we'll soon be celebrating the joy of Christmas. Help me to make it a meaningful celebration for the people around me. Help me to spread your love. **† Amen.**

READINGS

Today:
Isaiah 35:1-6, 10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Monday:
Numbers 24:2-7,
15-17
Matthew 21:23-27

Tuesday:
Genesis 49:2, 8-10
Matthew 1:1-17

Wednesday:
Jeremiah 23:8-8
Matthew 1:18-24

Thursday:
Judges 13:2-7, 24-25
Luke 1:5-25

Friday:
Isaiah 7:10-14
Luke 1:26-38

Saturday:
Song of Songs 2:8-14
Luke 1:39-45

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 7:10-14
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-24

Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 12

