

third SUNDAY OF ADVENT

■ LIGHT THE ADVENT WREATH

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ... Come Lord Jesus, be our light! Open our hearts and minds to experience joy as we prepare to welcome you at Christmas.

■ READ THE GOSPEL for the Third Sunday of Advent (Cycle B) John 1:6-8, 19-28

“A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.”



Photo by Pete Pattison/Divine Chocolate for CRS

■ REFLECT WITH A STORY

How do you rejoice? Thirteen-year-old Elias Yeboah-Asiamah, who lives in Ghana, a country in Western Africa, shows joy through dancing. “I like dancing ... When it is my birthday, I wear white because I am happy and my friends come ‘round ... We dance together.” Elias’ joy is evident to others. “People ask me to perform at parties. They say, ‘Elias, we want you to dance for us, to make us happy!’”

Besides dancing, Elias also enjoys school. He can go to school because his mom and dad are part of a cocoa farmer organization called Kuapa Kokoo. Cocoa is used to make chocolate, and this group of farmers even owns their own chocolate company, Divine Chocolate! Farmers from Kuapa Kokoo make enough money from selling their cocoa to take care of their community by building schools and providing school supplies.

On the third Sunday of Advent we celebrate “Gaudete” Sunday. Gaudete means “rejoice.” It might seem strange that going to school could give somebody deep joy, but Elias knows that going to school will provide a bright future full of promise. It’s like rejoicing in God’s promise, the promise that John the Baptist points to by announcing the coming of Jesus Christ.

PRAY

God, fill us with the joy of Christ as we eagerly await his coming at Christmas. May the joy you bring inspire us to care for each other as we journey together as one human family. Amen

REFLECT

What brings you joy? How can you bring the joy of Christ to a world in need?

ACT

Visit a nursing home or hospital and spend time with the patients who don’t receive many visitors —you can even bring cards, drawings, or flowers to brighten up their rooms!

GIVE

Bring joy to those you love with delicious chocolate. Purchase chocolate from Divine and support cocoa farmers in Ghana. Visit crsfairtrade.org.