Third Sunday of Advent (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 3:10-18): (…) Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah. John answered them all, saying, “I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” Exhorting them in many other ways, he preached good news to the people.

John was to be the very last testimony before Jesus' arrival

Cardinal Jorge MEJÍA Archivist and Librarian of Holy Roman Church
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, the liturgy of this Sunday, known as "Gaudete" Sunday, is a special invitation to us to joyfulness, to a vigilance that is not sad but happy. "Gaudete in Domino simper", St Paul wrote: "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil 4:4).

Today, furthermore, God's word introduces us to Jesus Christ's precursor: Saint John the Baptist. God the Father is preparing the arrival, that is, the Advent, of His Son, born of the Virgin Mary, in many different ways, as the beginning of the Letter to the Hebrews (1.1), says: Patriarchs, Prophets and Kings prepared Jesus' arrival… But Saint John the Baptist, as can be seen in his liturgy, would be the one to point him out to the world, and the privilege of Baptizing our Lord went —mysteriously!— to him. His was to be the very last testimony before Jesus' arrival. And he gave it with his life, with his death and with his word.

—Let us listen today to his word, exhorting us to share what we have and to respect the justice and dignity everybody deserves.