



## PARISH of SAINT OSMUND

SALISBURY

St Gregory and the English Martyrs Church | St Osmund's Church

95 Exeter Street | Salisbury | SP1 2SF | T. 01722 333581 | E. [salisbury.catholic@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:salisbury.catholic@cliftondiocese.com)



Advent 2025

### GAUDETE SUNDAY PODCAST

Hello everyone, and welcome to **“Joy That Grows Slowly”** a short podcast as we approach Gaudete Sunday, the halfway point of Advent.

Whether you’re listening at home, on a walk, in the car, or during a quiet moment with a cup of tea, thank you for joining me again as we continue our journey through Advent.

Last time, many of you shared how comforting it was simply to pause for a few minutes. And today, we reach the halfway point of Advent: **Gaudete Sunday — the Sunday of joy.**

In our churches this weekend the rose candle is lit, the vestments worn by the priest & deacon at church may be rose-coloured, and the whole tone of the liturgy shifts just a little — as if the Church leans in gently and whispers:

**“Rejoice... you’re halfway there.  
Keep going.  
The Lord is close.”**

But the joy of Gaudete Sunday is not the big, loud, festive kind. It’s not the joy of everything being perfect, or calm, or sorted.

Christian joy is different.

It can sit quietly beside sadness, tiredness, or uncertainty. It doesn’t deny reality, it transforms it.



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Sometimes joy whispers more than it shouts.

Think of Mary after the angel Gabriel left her.

She was filled with a deep and trembling joy — but also questions, change, and an unknown road ahead.

And yet, she moved forward, carrying courage and wonder together.

Maybe that's where many of us stand today:

not everything neat and tidy,

not everything fixed,

but still holding onto hope, perhaps only just.

And as Christmas draws nearer, life often speeds up.

There can be pressure to prepare, to buy, to organise, to host, to be cheerful — even when we're exhausted or distracted.

But Advent gently teaches us something essential:

**Joy is not something we manufacture.**

**Joy is something we receive.**

And often, it grows slowly — almost imperceptibly — in the small spaces where God is allowed to be God.

So perhaps this week, you might take a moment to notice the quiet signs of God's presence already in your life:

A phone call at just the right time.

A moment of peace in a busy day.

A memory that warms your heart.

A prayer, whispered honestly, that somehow softened the edge of a worry.

And perhaps even the simple fact that you're listening now — that you've given God these few minutes, is itself a grace, a tiny seed of joy.

Because joy doesn't ask for everything to be easy.

Joy simply asks that we stay open to God being with us in the middle of whatever life looks like.

The rose candle reminds us of this.

It's lighter, brighter, more hopeful — but still gentle.

It doesn't blaze like Easter fire.

It glows... steadily... quietly.



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And that's how God often works:  
not in dramatic flashes, but in the steady warmth of His presence.

And as we arrive at this midpoint in Advent and prepare ourselves for Christmas, the Church also invites us into something beautiful and deeply healing: **the Sacrament of Reconciliation**.

Here in our parish, we have a lovely opportunity to come before the Lord in Confession.

On **Wednesday 17th December**, at **7pm**, we will hold a **short Advent Reconciliation Service** at **St Gregory's Church**.

There will be a gentle Examination of Conscience, some quiet time for prayer, and several priests available to hear Confessions.

It's a simple, peaceful way to prepare your heart for the coming of Christ.

And of course, Confession is also available at other times throughout the week — including Saturday mornings — and all the details are in our parish newsletter and on the website.

Perhaps making space for this sacrament might be one of the ways joy grows within you this week.

Perhaps this week, you could ask yourself:

**Where is joy trying to grow in my life?**  
**And what small space can I offer God to let it grow?**

Because joy rarely arrives fully formed.  
It grows in prayer,  
in gratitude,  
in small acts of kindness,  
in choosing to trust even when the path is unclear.

And so as we enter this joyful week of Advent, may the Lord give you a joy that is steady and real, a joy that carries you,  
rather than a joy you feel pressured to create.

### **Closing Prayer**

God of hope and joy,  
we thank you for the gift of this Gaudete week.



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As we light the rose candle and hear the word “Rejoice,”  
may our hearts respond with trust and openness.

Strengthen us when we are tired.  
Comfort us where we feel burdened.  
Lift us when joy feels far away.  
And help us to recognise your presence already at work in our lives.

Lord Jesus, we wait for you —  
with hope, with longing, and with open hearts.

Amen.

Thank you for sharing these minutes of reflection.  
May the joy of Christ be a gentle companion for you in the days ahead.

**Deacon Stephen Godwin**

*Parish of St Osmund's, Salisbury*