



Father Danny Murphy is a retired Pastor from Brooklyn NY. A gifted man with a God given talent to inspire and God's gift to us at Holy Cross Church in Vero Beach Florida. This is just one of his inspirational homilies.

Fr. Danny Murphy – ADVENT 3- 2016

Well this evening we are going to reflect on the poetry of Isaiah from our first reading. But Gaudete Sunday! Gaudete is a Latin word meaning: "to rejoice." The Church encourages us to rejoice today. That's why, on our Advent wreath we lit the pink candle. Pink, not because Mary and Joseph wanted a girl! Pink, because that color, pink or rose, is considered less somber than purple, violet. The church wants us to rejoice today because Christmas is so, so close. Two weeks, right? Two weeks until Christmas! In keeping with this theme of rejoicing, here is a silly story on "Pink" Sunday. We've got to set the record straight! There is no war against Christmas in our country. Reliable sources assure me that our government would gladly display a Nativity scene in Washington. The problem is they can't find three wise men there! Gaudete Sunday, we did it, we rejoiced on Gaudete Sunday, I could sit

down now! BUT, before I do I am gonna share with you ten Christmas gifts, ten Christmas gifts that won't cost you ten cents, but ten Christmas gifts that will keep on giving, long after Christmas!

FIRST: Give the gift of Listening but REALLY listening, actively listening. No interrupting, no daydreaming, no multi-tasking, no preparing your response; just Listening. To whomever you give that gift of listening, you can be assured your gift will be cherished.

SECOND: Give the gift of affection. Be generous in giving hugs, perhaps touching, grasping the other person's hand. Simple gestures such as that and so many others non verbally say to the other person a lot about your love and your compassion for the other person. Infants who are not held and hugged regularly develop serious psychological consequences. We all need to be held and hugged regularly no matter what our age.

THIRD: Give the gift of laughter. Clip clever cartoons, numerous articles. Share, share jokes, funny stories with others. By doing so, you are saying: "I love to see you laughing. I love laughing with you!"

FOURTH: Give the gift of a written note. It can be a simple thank-you. It could be a multi-page letter. Yes, there certainly is a place for texting, emailing, Facebook twitter and other forms of communication, but nothing can compare with a handwritten note.

FIFTH: Give the gift of a compliment. Once at a wedding, I didn't say what I usually say to the bride which is "That's a beautiful gown." At this particular wedding I said: "Wow, you

make that gown look beautiful!" You see the difference? You don't give the credit to the gown, you give the credit to the bride! She blushed with delight, a simple compliment. So, "Boy, you look good in red, it is such a pleasure to work with you, wow, what a delicious meal." A simple sincere compliment can not only make the other persons day, but also could be remembered for a lifetime.

SIXTH: Give the gift of a cheerful disposition. You know the best way to feel good about yourself is to help others feel good about themselves. So even if you are experiencing a down day, you can still give a smile, a friendly hello, a kind word, a helping hand.

SEVENTH: Give the gift of a favor. You might not remember this, but back in the day, we used to talk a lot about performing Random Acts of Kindness. Maybe we should bring that back and maybe we should heed the suggestion of Mother Teresa who says: "You volunteer to do what no one else wants to do."

Eighth: Give the gift of forgiveness. I don't know who taught me this, but when I get to heaven, I'm going to thank this person profusely for teaching me this. One of the most important lessons I ever learned is that forgiveness is not a feeling, has nothing to do with feeling. Forgiveness is a decision! With the grace of God I can start to forgive, no matter how deep the hurt. If you give the gift of forgiveness, you are assuring yourself of a Merry Christmas.

Ninth: Give the gift of witness. You can be a bright light in our dark world. You can! Jesus is the light of the world. If you live in his light. If you live as he lived, then you too, will make our invisible God visible.

Tenth: Give a gift to yourself. Stop beating yourself up! Stop expecting, demanding so much of yourself. My guess is that you treat others better than you treat yourself. So, treat yourself as you treat others!

Ten Christmas gifts that won't cost you ten cents. Ten Christmas gifts that we all can do. This is not way over your head. Ten Christmas gifts that the recipients won't put under the tree, but rather they will put them in their hearts where they will stay long after Christmas Day!