



Morning Star Las Cruces 2025 Discussion Questions

December 14, 2025 (Advent 3)

Series: A Jarring Christmas: Resisting Despair with Defiant Expectation

Title: Genuine Joy

Text: Matthew 11:2-11

1. What's something small that reliably brings you joy, like a favorite snack, a cozy routine or a moment in your day that makes you smile?
2. When have you experienced a kind of joy that surprised you, not because everything was going well, but because something meaningful or healing was happening?
3. What stood out to you in the message titled *A Jarring Christmas: Genuine Joy*? Did a word, story or image deepen or challenge your understanding of joy during Advent?
4. Read Matthew 11:2-11. What part of this passage captures your attention today? John's question from prison? Jesus' response? Jesus' description of John? Something else? Why?

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5. Jesus responds to John's doubt not with explanation but with evidence: healing, liberation and good news for the poor. How does this shape your understanding of what genuine joy looks like?

6. John voices his doubts from a prison cell, a place of fear, uncertainty and isolation. The current season of Advent is often associated with warmth, connection and togetherness. How does this contrast invite you to think differently about where joy can be experienced?

7. Read Isaiah 35:1-6. How does the prophet's vision of renewal connect with Jesus' words to John? Where do you see joy connected to restoration?

8. Read Galatians 5:22-23. Joy is listed as a fruit of the Spirit. How does this vision of joy as something cultivated, not manufactured, speak to you this season?

9. Joy often grows in very ordinary places. What is one simple, practical practice you could choose this week that might make space for the Spirit's joy to take root in you?

10. How can your group pray for you as you seek a joy that is genuine, rooted in compassion, grounded in justice and open to God's presence in the everyday?

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