



21 December 2025

4th Sunday of Advent

Year A

CALLED TO BE GOD'S PARTNERS

C In this Fourth Sunday of Advent, we are invited to follow St. Joseph's example. Like him, we are asked to place ourselves totally at the service of God in the fulfillment of His plan of salvation. It is only by doing so that we will be able to experience real peace and be assured of our final success.

The Lord, who created the world without us, could easily bring His plan to completion without us. But this is not what He usually does. He elevates us to the role of "partners" in the fulfillment of His plan, out of appreciation for our dignity, freedom, and other qualities that He has endowed us with. If we say "Yes," His sure success will also be ours.



INTRODUCTORY RITES



Entrance Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)

**Drop down dew from above,
you heavens, and let the clouds
rain down the Just One; let
the earth be opened and bring
forth a Savior. (Cf. Is 45:8)**

Greeting

P —Praise and honor to God who calls us to be partners in the realization of his plan. May his grace and peace be with you all.
All—And with your spirit.

Penitential Act

P —Coming together as God's family on this last Sunday of Advent, let us humbly ask the Lord's forgiveness of our past sins, and the grace to be always ready to

cooperate with him. *(Pause)*

P —Lord Jesus, you constantly invite us to work with you in carrying out the Father's plan but we often hesitate or even refuse to cooperate with you. Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P —Lord Jesus, you were always intent on doing the Father's will, but we prefer to do our own will. Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P —Lord Jesus, you are the "Emmanuel" who brings the Father's love to us, but we often ignore your presence. Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P —May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

Collect (Opening Prayer)

P —Pour forth, we beseech

you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



1st Reading *Is 7:10-14*

It was part of God's plan of salvation that the Messiah be a descendant of King David. Such a plan will be carried out even if some people, like the proud King Ahaz, refuse to cooperate with it. Such is the message coming to us through the famous "Emmanuel prophecy" we are about to hear.

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R —A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying: “Ask for a sign from the Lord, your God; let it be deep as the netherworld, or high as the sky!” But Ahaz answered, “I will not ask! I will not tempt the Lord!”

Then Isaiah said: “Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people? Must you also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.”

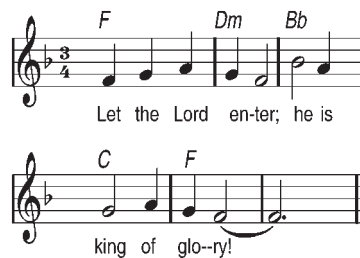
The Word of the Lord.
All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6

R —*Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.*

R. M. Velez



* The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it. For he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

R.

* Who can ascend the mountain of the Lord? Or who may stand in his holy place? He whose hands are sinless, whose heart is clean, who desires not what is vain.

R.

* He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a reward from God his savior. Such is the race that seeks for him, that seeks the face of the God of Jacob. **R.**

2nd Reading *Rom 1:1-7*

The descent of the Messiah from King David was also emphasized by the apostle Paul, as we gather from these opening sentences of his Letter to the Romans.

R —A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised previously through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, the gospel about his Son, descended from David according to the flesh, but was shown as Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we have received the grace of apostleship, to bring about the obedience of faith, for the sake of his name, among all the Gentiles, among whom are you also, who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

To all the beloved of God in Rome, called to be holy, grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.
All—Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation *Mt 1:23*

All—Alleluia, Alleluia.

The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Gospel *Mt 1:18-24*

Joseph's readiness to obey enables God to fulfill the promises of old and to carry out His plan of salvation in Jesus, "Son of David" and "Emmanuel."

P —The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P —A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

All—Glory to you, O Lord.

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly.

Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a

dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means “God is with us.”

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

The Gospel of the Lord.
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

Profession of Faith

(Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow)* **and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.*** For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glori-

fied, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P –The Lord constantly invites us to be His partners in the implementation of His plan. Aware of our weaknesses, let us plead for His help as we say . . .

All–Lord, graciously hear us.

C –That the Church may fully trust in God, especially in times of trial, and be constantly faithful to Him, let us pray. **R.**

C –That all those in a position of authority in the Church may always offer a shining example of cooperation with the Lord in carrying out His plan, let us pray. **R.**

C –That the policy-makers of our society may always plan activities that are fully in accordance with God's law, let us pray. **R.**

C –That our youth may plan their future after discerning God's will through prayer and with the guidance of wise persons, let us pray. **R.**

P –Lord God, grant us the grace to imitate the example of St. Joseph, and make our lives a faithful instrument of Your plan. You who live and reign forever and ever.

All–Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



Preparation of the Gifts

P –Pray, brethren . . .

All–May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P –O Lord, may the Holy Spirit sanctify these gifts laid

upon your altar, just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Through Christ our Lord.

All–Amen.

Preface of Advent II

P –The Lord be with you.

All–And with your spirit.

P –Lift up your hearts.

All–We lift them up to the Lord.

P –Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All–It is right and just.

P –It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For all the oracles of the prophets foretold him, the Virgin Mother longed for him with love beyond all telling, John the Baptist sang of his coming and proclaimed his presence when he came.

It is by his gift that already we rejoice at the mystery of his Nativity, so that he may find us watchful in prayer and exultant in his praise.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

All–Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Memorial Acclamation

P –The mystery of faith.

All–Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

COMMUNION RITE



All–Our Father . . .

P –Deliver us, Lord . . .

All–For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

Sign of Peace

Breaking of the Bread

All–Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. (2×)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Communion

P –Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.

All–Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.)

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel. (Is 7:14)

Prayer after Communion

P –Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All–Amen.

CONCLUDING RITES



P –The Lord be with you.

All–And with your spirit.

P –May almighty God bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All–Amen.

P –Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All–Thanks be to God.



Word And Life Publications

WE REJOICE AND ARE FULL OF HOPE BECAUSE GOD CALLS US TO BE HIS PARTNERS

• *Jess P. Balon*

Last Sunday, we rejoiced because the Lord is near. Today, we rejoice because the Lord calls us to share in His work — to be **partners in His plan of love and peace** for the world.

This is a great honor and a source of deep joy. We already know how the story ends: God will triumph over all evil, and all who stand with Him will share in that victory.

Our faith does not ignore the darkness around us; rather, it helps us see reality in full — both the suffering and the goodness that still flourishes despite it. Faith teaches us to look beyond evil and recognize the many signs of hope God continues to plant in the world.

When we see parents caring for their children, teachers shaping young minds, doctors and nurses serving the sick, and countless people working for justice and

peace, we know that **goodness is alive**. These are living proofs that the Lord is near and at work among us.

Every act of kindness, every effort for truth, peace, and compassion — all are signs of God's presence. They remind us that we have reason **to rejoice and to hope**.

God not only blesses us with His love; He invites us to **become instruments of that love**, to help build His Kingdom — a civilization of life, justice, and peace.

To rejoice, then, is not to escape reality, but to recognize that even in a wounded world, **God's light still shines**. He walks with us, works through us, and invites us to make His dream — and our deepest hopes — come true.

Rejoice, for the Lord is near — and He calls us to share in His mission of love.



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