

**Sunday, December 18, 2022**  
**The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

- 1) Isaiah 7:10-14
- 2) Romans 1:1-7
- 3) Matthew 1:18-24

**FOCUS:** God keeps his promises.

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord reaffirms the promise of a savior for his people, a savior born under unusual circumstances who would clearly be God's chosen one. After many years had passed since that promise – years in which the Lord continued to guide and prepare his people – we hear of its fulfillment in Matthew's Gospel. In this final week of Advent, let us rejoice and praise God for he is faithful and keeps his promises.

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Isaiah prophesies that the Lord will give his people a sign: A virgin shall conceive and give birth to a son and will name him Emmanuel. Paul introduces himself to the Romans as one *called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God*, specifically among the Gentiles. In the Gospel, Matthew recounts how the birth of Jesus Christ came to pass, in accordance with Isaiah's prophecy.

**UNIVERSAL PRAYER**

PRIEST: Let us bring our prayers and petitions before the Lord, trusting in his care and compassion.

- 1) That the Holy Spirit may draw the faithful to deeper conversion and openness to his call to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) That the governments of the world may have the hand of the Lord upon them in working for peace among peoples in conflict, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) That the Lord may bring comfort and solace to all those who have recently lost a loved one, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) That we who are gathered here may be transformed by this sacrament for the sake of all that is true and good, let us pray to the Lord.
- 5) That the Lord may welcome all the faithful departed into his glory, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

PRIEST: Merciful God, we ask that you hear these prayers we have presented before you and answer them in accordance with your divine providence. We make this prayer in Christ's name.