

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Anticipating Emmanuel

Loving Father and King of Glory,
you accept us with all of our flaws.
As we anticipate the nativity of our Lord,
we are reminded that we should
seek to model the humility
of Mary and Joseph
and obey God's will.
Help us find the serenity
to ready our hearts to welcome others,
as Mary and Joseph welcomed Jesus.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Submitting to God's Will



Today's readings: Isaiah 7:10–14; Psalm 24:1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Romans 1:1–7; Matthew 1:18–24. In the second reading, St. Paul is referred to as “a slave of Christ Jesus.” The word *slave* to Paul means “one who is devoted to the service of another.” The apostle emulates what we are called to do and to become as Christians. In serving God, we submit to a duty that stems from our baptism.

Numerous works of art beautifully reflect Mary's yes at the annunciation. Today, we hear of St. Joseph's yes. When an angel appears to Joseph in a dream, telling him not to be afraid “to take Mary your wife into your home,” Joseph responds with action. “When Joseph awoke,” the

Gospel tells us, “he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took his wife into his home.” As another account of the nativity, this is a wonderful story to share with children and teenagers. Becoming the foster father of Jesus was not something that was done to Joseph; he accepted his role with eyes of faith.

This week pray for stronger faith to continue to ponder the mystery that is God-among-us. The Lord is here, and he is yet to come. Salvation is promised, and it is near. Joyful expectation, indeed. The second “O” antiphon is prayed today, moving us closer to Christmas: “O sacred Lord . . . Come . . . to set us free.”