



ADVENT



Reflections

2023 SERIES

Fourth Sunday of Advent

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

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PRESIDENT

First Reading: 2 Samuel [7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16](#)
Second Reading: Romans [16:25-27](#)
Psalm: Psalms [89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29](#)
Gospel: Luke [1:26-38](#)



Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel has come to us! We love this season when we are reminded of God's tender love and precious gift of the Incarnation of Jesus.

During this time, we are reminded of the comfort we can take, knowing that God abides in us and in our world. We are asked to be disciples who manifest hope, peace, joy and love because we proclaim with our lives that God has transformed the world through the miracle of the Incarnation.

During this season, we love to hear the music of Christmas, reminding us to rejoice and to be joyful. Through good times and hard times, God is right here with us!

This year the spirit of Christmas seems different. It is not easy to hear the soothing lyrics:

“O come, all ye faithful to Bethlehem...”

“O little town of Bethlehem...”
“Joy to the world...”

- juxtaposed with the daily news.

We hear stories about prolific bombing, killing enemies and with them our own citizens, injuring children, withholding necessary resources, shouting rhetoric of hatred and violence. We learn that Bethlehem is not even open to others this Christmas.

And yet, the Christmas story continues.

We hear quiet, persistent voices coming from all around the world, crying for an end to the war, a cease-fire, a return of hostages. Brave government officials from the Middle East and other places have had the courage to call for a cease-fire and a peaceful, though difficult, resolution to this terrifying conflict. Signs are all around us that Christ, our savior is here!

Let us notice this Christmas that Jesus is, indeed, still among us, and that whatever small part we play, it is important to get the message to our world that, no matter how intense the conflict and hatred is, God is still among us and therefore, there is reason to hope.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

Let us lift our voices and hearts in confidence, joining others throughout the world, praying for peace! Perhaps that can be our participation in the Christmas miracle this year!