



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

**THIS SUNDAY December 22 & BEYOND**

## **God With Us**



As the Advent Season comes to an end, the readings for this Sunday focus on the coming of the one who is to bring new hope to God's people, to restore their lives and bring back the joy, to save them from the slavery of sin and death, to reconcile them with their Creator, with all of creation, with one another and with themselves.

This is the promised Emmanuel (God with Us). God will no longer be just up there, in an unreachable realm, having compassion of his creatures and doing remarkable things to save them from time to time. God will now dwell among His people, and His people will get to know Him, because He has chosen to reveal Himself to them in human shape.

But what leads God to do this? Is it because He wants to feel what it would be like to be a human being? That would be simplistic. If we believe in an Almighty God, then He does not need to become human to know exactly what it feels like to be human. God must have a very definite purpose.

He does. His infinite love and his willingness to save us in spite of ourselves leads Him to do this. By emptying Himself of his divine features He uplifts our humanity to Himself. This is not just a downward movement. It is a two-way movement. God the Son is fully human but He is also fully divine. This is the wonderful mystery of incarnation. But the ultimate purpose of incarnation is to take us all up back to God, to our true home, to where we have actually always belonged.

So God sends His Holy Spirit to impregnate Mary, the chosen human vessel, and God the Son starts to be humanly conceived in her womb. From the very start, as

soon as Mary's pregnancy is visible, human pain affects both Mary and her betrothed, Joseph. Anguish fills this betrothed couple. Joseph feels betrayed and at the same time his goodness and love make him decide to leave Mary secretly in order to preserve her reputation. Then God's angel assures him of the divine origin of her pregnancy and instructs him to name the child Jesus (God saves). Now he learns about the saving mission of the child he is responsible for. It is so easy to disregard what Joseph (and not only Mary) had to go through...

At the same time, this chosen couple has the greatest of all blessings. The blessing of raising God's incarnation. The most sacred of missions. The highest duty to God.

We are so blessed! God is no longer only in our favor; not only is it God for us, but God with us. He has shown us His infinite love in Jesus Christ's human life: a life lived for us all, a life of unconditional self-giving love.

We have now learned that incarnation brings the greatest joy but also entails human suffering. It is not easy for the divine to become human and it is not easy for the human to become divine. But the two-way movement that started in Mary's womb has never ceased. It will never cease because it is God's wish to uplift us to Himself. So we are to incarnate His beloved Son in our lives. We are to be His eyes, lips, arms and legs in this broken world. We are called to bring reconciliation, hope, healing, and joy. It will not be easy. We may suffer. But the blessing and joy of being part of God's incarnation surpasses it all. Merry Christmas!

Fr, Carlos Expósito, Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10-17 Psalm 24:1-7 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25

## CALENDAR

**SUNDAY: The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

8:00am Low Mass (Church)

10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)

7:00pm Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue*—

*Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.*

**TUESDAY:**            *Christmas Eve*  
Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)  
10:30pm Musical Offering (Church)  
11:00pm Solemn Mass (Church)  
12:00am Christmas Cookie Party (Parish Hall)

**WEDNESDAY**        *Christmas Day*  
10:00am Low Mass with Hymns (Church)

**FRIDAY**                AA Meetings  
8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)  
8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)

**SUNDAY**                **The First Sunday after Christmas**  
8:00am Low Mass (Church)  
10:30am Solemn Mass (Church)  
          AA Meeting  
7:00p Little Apple Group (Parish Hall)