

# The Living Word

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year A

21 December 2025

## First Reading Is 7:10-14

*The virgin will conceive.*

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above.' 'No', Ahaz answered 'I will not put the Lord to the test.'

Then Isaiah said:

'Listen now, House of David:

are you not satisfied with trying the  
patience of men

without trying the patience of my God, too?

The Lord himself, therefore,

will give you a sign.

It is this: the maiden is with child

and will soon give birth to a son

whom she will call Immanuel,

a name which means "God-is-with-us".'

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 23:1-6. R. see vv 7. 10**

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

1. The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,  
the world and all its peoples.  
It is he who set it on the seas;  
on the waters he made it firm. (R.)

2. Who shall climb the mountain of the  
Lord?  
Who shall stand in his holy place?  
The man with clean hands and pure  
heart,  
who desires not worthless things. (R.)

3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord  
and reward from the God who saves him.  
Such are the men who seek him,  
seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

## Second Reading Rom 1:1-7

*Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.*

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead.

Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send grace and peace.

## Gospel Acclamation Mt 1:23

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**A virgin will give birth to a son;**

**his name will be Emmanuel:**

**God is with us.**

**Alleluia!**

## Gospel Mt 1:18-24

*Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.*

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to  
a son

and they will call him Emmanuel,

a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

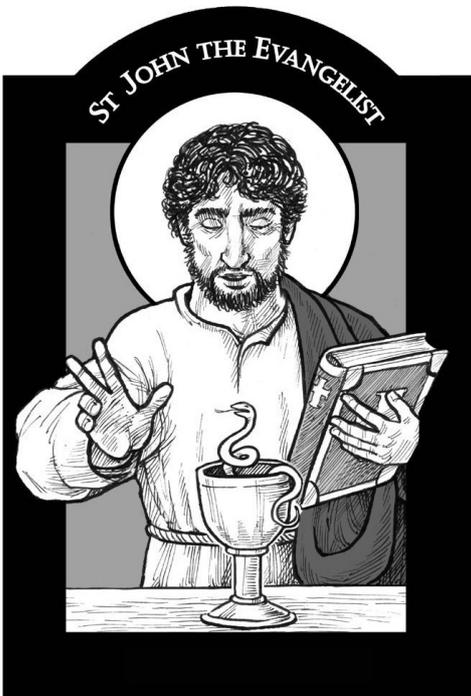


## Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

Despite all of the excitement associated with eschatological fulfilment, despite all of the assurance we have that it will be an experience of peace and abundant life, the mystery for which we long requires the risk of faith. Despite all of the times that we have celebrated the Nativity, we still do not have full comprehension and understanding. Still we are invited to enter deeply into the event that is before us. Will we step into a life of deeper faith and commitment, or will we merely participate in the external celebration of the feast? Only we can decide, and only we will really know the decision that we make.

The circumstances of our lives influence the way we live out our faith. As Christians, we are called to devote ourselves to the service of Christ. Our primary commitment must be to Christ and to the way of being human that he has shown us. We must be committed to what enriches life and not to what diminishes it. We must be committed to the good of people and not to the hoarding of things. We may not be official heralds of the gospel, but we proclaim our faith in the way we live our lives, in the kindness with which we treat others, in honesty of our business transactions. We proclaim the gospel when we stand for justice, when we forgive those who have offended us, when we show compassion to those who suffer. As we step into the eschatological age, we are called to recommit ourselves to genuine Christian living.

The psalm responses are from the English Translation of the Lectionary for the Mass ©1981 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved. The psalm texts, from *The Psalms, A New Translation*, ©1963 by The Grail, England and used by permission of the publishers. The scriptural quotations are taken from the *Jerusalem Bible*, published and copyrighted 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers.  
© 2017 Creative Ministry Resources Pty Ltd  
All use must be in accordance with your user licensing agreement.



**S**t John the Evangelist was a son of Zebedee and brother of James. John and James (the Greater) were apostles of Jesus, who referred to them as the 'sons of thunder'. He was a witness to many events including the Transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter and the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. As he stood at the foot of the cross, John was told by Jesus to accept Mary as his adopted mother. John was the first to reach the tomb when told of the resurrection and the first to recognise the Risen Lord when he appeared to them at Lake Tiberias. Towards the end of his life, John wrote the fourth Gospel as a witness to the Divinity of Christ. He also wrote three epistles contained in the New Testament, and is traditionally, though perhaps not correctly, identified as the author of the Book of Revelation.



Follow the branch that extends from King David to the birth of Jesus.



## Crossword

### Down

- 1: a newborn
- 4: the opposite of false
- 5: this name means 'God is with us'
- 7: to give someone your word
- 9: betrothed, to be married

### Across

- 2: Jesus' mother
- 3: with little or no noise
- 6: he was engaged to Mary
- 8: a special messenger of God
- 10: not old
- 11: to make someone feel uncomfortable or self-conscious
- 12: the angel appeared to Joseph in a ...

