

SURRENDERING OUR DREAMS TO GOD

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I love to dream.

Dreaming gives me space to hope and to imagine concrete plans—for my life, for my family and friends, for the Catholic Church and the congregation I belong to, and for the mission entrusted to me.

I dream that someday, together with my whole family, I could visit Rome and the Holy Land; that my siblings would be secure and well-cared for in their old age; and that my congregation would flourish and overcome the many challenges that come with our mission.

And if it were possible—though I know it is not realistic—I would wish for my beloved departed brethren to return to life so we could catch up and share stories again.

Many more are the dreams that visit me in moments of joy, longing, and even holy imaginings. However, I ask myself: Where is God in my dreams? Do I include him? Do I surrender all my dreams and plans to him?

Today's Gospel speaks of Joseph. Joseph also had dreams—perhaps of a quiet, simple life with Mary. Yet those dreams are shaken when he learns of her

unexpected pregnancy. Then comes the dream—not born of his own longing, but sent by God through an angel: “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife... what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

In that moment, Joseph's personal dreams give way to God's greater dream—the salvation of the world through Jesus.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent invites us to the same surrender. God's dream is never to erase ours, but to fulfill them in ways far beyond what we can imagine. Like Joseph, we too face moments when God's plan disrupts our own. The Gospel

challenges us:

- listen**—to make space for God's voice in the silence of prayer.

- trust**—to believe that God's plan is greater than our fears.

- obey**—to act promptly and wholeheartedly when God calls.

Joseph's silent “yes” mirrors Mary's own “yes.” Together, their obedience made way for the greatest miracle of all—the Emmanuel, “God with us.”

This Christmas, may we place all our dreams—big and small, possible and impossible—into the hands of the God whose dream is our salvation. For in his time, every good desire planted in our hearts will find its perfect fulfillment.



THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon (cf. Is 45:8)
(Recited when there is no opening song)

**Drop down dew from above,
you heavens, and let the clouds
rain down the Just One; let
the earth be opened and bring
forth a Savior.**

Lighting of the Advent Candle
*(The lighting of the fourth candle of
the Advent wreath may be made after
the entrance song, with the following or
similar prayer:)*

P—Father, as our Advent pilgrimage draws to a close, we relight the candles of hope, peace, and joy. And we light the candle of love. Grant us the courage to share your love: love for life and all creation, love for sinners and saints, love for the poor and the little ones. We thank you for the hope your Son gives us, for the peace he bestows, for the joy your Spirit pours into our hearts, and for your love that redeems us and shows us the way.

All—Amen.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here)

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

*(These [or similar words] may be used
to address the assembly)*

P—Joseph is needed to give legal paternity to the Child and to provide a home and protection to Mary and Jesus. Though Joseph at first is distressed by the condition of his betrothed, he too agrees when the angel enlightens him on the mystery that surrounds Mary's pregnancy. In Joseph, we find the shadow of the heavenly Father who loves and protects us as his children.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
(Pause)

P—Have mercy on us, O Lord.
All—For we have sinned against you.

P—Show us, O Lord, your mercy.
All—And grant us your salvation.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.
All—Lord, have mercy.
P—Christ, have mercy.
All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.
All—Lord, have mercy.

*(During Advent, the Gloria is omitted.
But it is recited/sung during the Misa
de Gallo)*

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Is 7:10-14) *(Sit)*

The prophet Isaiah announces the birth of a child who will be called “Emmanuel”—the sign of God’s presence among them. His Davidic lineage is traced through Joseph as we shall hear in the Gospel.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

THE LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying: Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God; let it be deep as the netherworld, or high as the sky! But Ahaz answered, “I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!” Then Isaiah said: Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people, must you also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign:

the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.

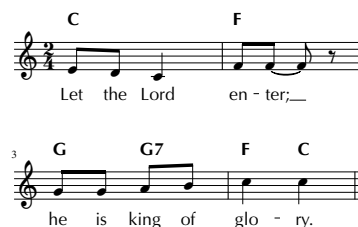
—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 24)

R—Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

E.C. Marfori



1. The LORD's are the earth and its fullness;/ the world and those who dwell in it./ For he founded it upon the seas/ and established it upon the rivers. **(R)**

2. Who can ascend the mountain of the LORD?/ Or who may stand in his holy place?/ One whose hands are sinless,/ whose heart is clean,/ who desires not what is vain. **(R)**

3. He shall receive a blessing from the LORD,/ a reward from God his savior./ Such is the race that seeks for him,/ that seeks the face of the God of Jacob. **(R)**

Second Reading (Rom 1:1-7)

The apostle Paul tells us that the Lord Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecies of old, as contained in the Scriptures. He is from the lineage of David in his human nature.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

PAUL, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised previously through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, the gospel about his Son, descended from David according to the flesh, but established as Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness through

resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we have received the grace of apostleship, to bring about the obedience of faith, for the sake of his name, among all the Gentiles, among whom are you also, who are called to belong to Jesus Christ; to all the beloved of God in Rome, called to be holy. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

—The word of the Lord.
All—Thanks be to God.

Alleluia (Mt 1:23) (*Stand*)

All—Alleluia, alleluia. The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mt 1:18-24)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

THIS IS HOW the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: *Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel*, which means “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

—The Gospel of the Lord.
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Profession of Faith (*Stand*)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (at the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P—The heavenly Father entrusted the mystery of the Savior’s birth to St. Joseph, the guardian of the Holy Family. Let us pray that, following the example of St. Joseph, we may mirror the love of the heavenly Father here on earth. Let our response be:

R—Loving Father, hear our prayer.

C—May the Pope, bishops, and the clergy, like St. Joseph, mirror God’s fatherly care for the people entrusted to their pastoral ministry. We pray: **(R)**

C—May government officials and civic leaders act like responsible guardians in providing for the needs of the people, keeping them safe, and enhancing their development. We pray: **(R)**

C—May fathers turn to the Lord in moments of difficulties and dream of a bright future for their children. We pray: **(R)**

C—May the candle of love on this Fourth Sunday of Advent inspire us to share this love with our family and friends, but especially with those in most need of it. We pray: **(R)**

C—May St. Joseph, patron of the dying, help those who are about to pass from this life, and direct them to the vision of the Lord Jesus. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: **(R)**

P—Loving Father, you made St. Joseph the guardian of the Redeemer. Through his intercession, watch over the family redeemed by the blood of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns forever and ever.

All—Amen.



Presentation of the Gifts
(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—May the Holy Spirit, O

Lord, sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar, just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

Preface I (Advent)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For he assumed at his first coming the lowliness of human flesh, and so fulfilled the design you formed long ago, and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, that, when he comes again in glory and majesty and all is at last made manifest, we who watch for that day may inherit the great promise in which now we dare to hope.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace

In Celebration of our 25th Anniversary

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Invitation to Communion

(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon (Is 7:14)

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

Prayer after Communion

(Stand)

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity.

Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Solemn Blessing

P—Bow down for the blessing.
(Pause)

May the almighty and merciful God, by whose grace you have placed your faith in the First Coming of his Only Begotten Son and yearn for his coming again, sanctify you by the radiance of Christ's Advent and enrich you with his blessing.

All—Amen.

P—As you run the race of this present life, may he make you firm in faith, joyful in hope, and active in charity.

All—Amen.

P—So that, rejoicing now with devotion at the Redeemer's coming in the flesh, you may be endowed with the rich reward of eternal life when he comes again in majesty.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—The Mass has been offered. Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All—Thanks be to God.