

## Fourth Week of Advent Prayer for Families

“And in the end, everything else will turn out to be unimportant and inessential, except for this: Father, Child, and Love.”

St. (Pope) John Paul II



### Acknowledgement of Land

As we gather in God’s presence, let us connect our feet to the ground and remind us of the place that we are praying on. As we enter stillness, and open our hearts, we acknowledge the wisdom of the First Nations Peoples of this place, and their continued spiritual connection and relationship to place. Imagine what is possible when we listen deeply to the people of our place and speak the language of love.

### Fourth Week of Advent

## Love

The fourth candle of Advent represents Love, the ultimate love of God that He might send His only Son for us. Called the “Angel’s Candle,” the fourth candle of Advent is lit the Sunday before Christmas, and it is the colour purple, leading us to eagerly await the new Kingdom of God on earth.

*Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.*

Isiah 7:14

### Scripture

A reading from the Holy Gospel of Matthew [Matthew 1:18-24]

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, 1:25 but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.



## Reflection

Emmanuel – ‘God is with us’. There is never an instant when he is not with us. With him, we make our own soul every day of our earthly life. We need have no fear of the changes of life. Instead, we see them for what they are – as surprising stages along our journey home with him.

Teach us, Lord, to be Emmanuel for the people in our lives.

Leader: Let us pray (all together).

God of Love,

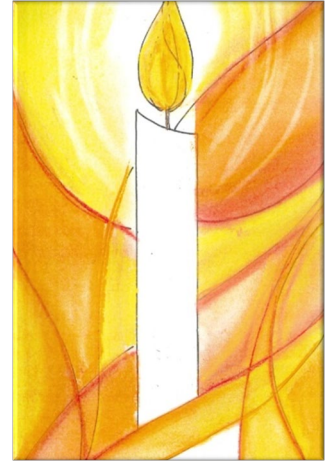
Your son, Jesus, is your greatest gift to us.

He is a sign of your love.

Help us walk in that love during the weeks of Advent, as we wait and prepare for his coming.

We pray in the name of Jesus, our Saviour.

Amen.



## Call to Action

- [Reflection Questions for the 4th Sunday of Advent Year A](#)
  - Do I rely on my own knowledge?
  - Am I willing to accept that there are things beyond my comprehension?
  - Do I trust in God when I feel hemmed in by my problems?
- Reflect- [Seeking the simplicity of Christmas](#) by Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ.

## References

Context: Hallow (2022) Advent Candles and Advent Wreaths: The History and Meaning, Colors, Symbolism, Themes, and More. <https://hallow.com/blog/advent-candles-and-advent-wreaths/>

Reflection: Sacred Space (2022) *Sacred Space: your daily prayer online*  
<https://www.sacredspace.ie>

Images: Adrien Innes-Simpson.

