



ST. PIUS V CATHOLIC CHURCH 3310 S. GRAND AVE [www.stpiusv.org](http://www.stpiusv.org)  
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## Fourth Sunday of Advent

*Sr. Helena Monahan*

### *O Key of David*



The readings from the Fourth Sunday of Advent trace our loving God’s desire and commitment to be present to us through all time and in every situation. In the reading from the second book of Samuel, God asks Nathan the prophet to tell King David that God raised him from being a shepherd to being a “commander of my people Israel.” More importantly, God asks Nathan to remind David that He has been with him “wherever” he went. God then promises to raise up David’s heir whose kingdom “shall stand firm forever.”

In the Gospel, Luke is careful to indicate that Joseph, the soon to be father of Jesus, is “of the house of David,” affirming God’s promise to David. The Gospel also narrates the beautiful story of the Virgin Mary at the moment when the angel Gabriel told her that she would “conceive in her womb and bear a son” to be named Jesus. The moment Mary said, “May it be done to me according to your word,” God became Incarnate for each of us! And it is only because of Mary’s “Yes” that we are all anticipating Christmas.

In these challenging times when we are afraid and stressed, today’s readings provide reassurance that God has not and will not abandon us. In ways we do not understand, God is with us. Today we are invited to “ponder” with Mary what God is asking. How are we present to one another? What is our response? How do we help so many who are in need? How do we say YES?

## Fourth Monday of Advent

Pat Hinton

### **O Radiant Dawn**

December 21<sup>st</sup>-the winter solstice-the day with the fewest hours of sunlight of the year. We wait in darkness. In this time of Covid-19 as we struggle, whether physically, emotionally or spiritually, we tire and grow impatient. We hope that, once again, God will say 'Let there be light!' How fitting that the 'O' antiphon for this day is 'O Radiant Dawn'.

Many of us have waited in the early hours of the morning to see the sun rise. We trust that even though it seems to delay, the sky gradually illuminates-and then suddenly, we are blinded by its brilliant light!

In the first reading for today, we are told, the winter is gone, and we are greeted by the One, Who loves us and ushers in a time of new growth and beauty. The Gospel reflects the patient waiting of Elizabeth and Mary, for God's promises. We too are in a time of hope-filled waiting and trust.

Let's each one of us, make an effort to seek out someone in darkness, and bring some light and hope into their life!



## Fourth Tuesday of Advent

Mary Mertzlufft

### **O Keystone**

In St. Louis it was common practice, as children, to stand outside a friend's home calling "Oh Joan..." until the child came to the door. Someone suggested the O Antiphons are similar; we are calling out to God with God's different names. Those antiphons make up the traditional song "O Come O Come Emmanuel" and reflect our many names for God such as "Emmanuel, Dayspring, Comforter,". We use the traditional ones this week like: O Root of Jesse's, Sun of Justice" but perhaps we can privately create our own too. "O Faithful One, O Trusted Friend."

Today's antiphon is "Keystone of the Church." Many of us St. Louisans were present when the Arch keystone was put into place in 1965, a site to remember. God is like that keystone and all the 'keystones' in our lives, all the people that keep us together, grounded. If ever we needed a keystone it is today. Each day we are reminded of the wars, covid, violence, racial tensions and unyielding politics which can consume and overwhelm us. We might call out to God, "Oh Keystone, keep our family together, our lives, our country, our world. You are the only one Who is "God With Us Always", our rock and safety Who guides us during turmoil, fear and death.

While advent is a time of joyful anticipation, in reality we never know what the season will bring us. This year one of my closest friends, of 47 years, died suddenly. As I deal with this loss I think of the people who grieve their own family and friend's deaths often due to covid, and the smaller "dying" of being unable to see loved ones or experience the healing that comes through human touch.

We are called to remember that God is our keystone, the place of guidance who positions everything else within us, where all the other sections of our life are held together. No matter who or what we grieve ( a death, a friendship, a job, a home ) we reach out to our keystone Who reminds us we can endure all things and all losses because God holds and comforts us.



In today's reading from Malachi, God promises to send the prophet Elijah before the Day of the Lord comes. Luke's gospel describes the birth and naming of John the Baptist, another prophet announcing the Day of the Lord. And so it happens. Jesus, the Messiah is born in completely unlikely circumstances, parented by a young Mom and a carpenter traveling during the chaos of a census. This is not the Day of the Lord that folks had been expecting.

We have a Catholic tradition of the Christmas novena, with prayer focused on 9 O Antiphons. I chose today for reflection because its antiphon is "O Emmanuel." God-with-us. The Day of the Lord is here. It is now.

We are promised a second coming, and I respect those who wait for that. I actually do not. It is beyond my comprehension. But I understand the name of God as Emmanuel. God lives among us and within us. God is at that deepest part of each of us, that best, most loving part. For me, this revelation is our most precious Christmas gift.

And so we pray with the words of the Rev. William Sloan Coffin, Jr: "Number us among the men and women who alleviated pain by sharing it. Men and women who were always willing to risk something big for something good. So may we leave in the world a little more truth; a little more justice; a little more beauty than would have been there had we not loved the world enough to quarrel with it for what it is not, but what it could be."

#### Fourth Thursday of Advent

*Michael Ohlman & Marie Andrews*

God must enjoy camping! Here David is in a fine cedar house and when he offers to build God some better dwelling than the tent God basically says "Thanks, but no Thank you." It seems God cannot be contained in a building of any sort. God enjoys being a part of nature.

God especially enjoys taking up residence in our hearts. God will not be held captive by circumstances whether you are in the field tending the sheep or leading an army into battle God is with you, at all times, in all places. Even if you hold your heart closed to God, God's covenant will not be broken. You will be held with compassion, that is with womb love. The dawn **will** break forth. You cannot nor can covid stop its coming. All we have to do is open our eyes and our hearts and we will be guided in the way of peace. The peace that enters our hearts when we see in another the face of God.

