**Note: Please leave this on the ambo, thanks.**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR A**

**Introduction:**

Good morning / evening we welcome our parishioners and visitors to Mary Immaculate Quakers Hill/Schofields Parish.

Our Gospel today focuses on Joseph. He is needed to give legal paternity to the Child and to provide home and protection to Mary and Jesus. Though Joseph is distressed at first by the condition of his betrothed, he too agrees when the angel enlightens him on the mystery that surrounds Mary’s pregnancy.

The Celebrant for today’s Mass is **Fr. Oliver**

Please now stand and join in our Entrance Hymn.

# \*THE ADVENT WREATH CEREMONY\*

# *The Advent Candle is brought in procession by rostered parishioners who walk in front of the Celebrant. (Note: This Candle lighting ceremony replaces the Penitential Rite during the Advent Season and Christmas Day)*

 **The Fourth Week of Advent**

# *At the conclusion of the Entrance hymn, the candle bearer faces the congregation and holds up the candle.*

**Priest:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen

**Priest:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the holy spirit be with you all

**All:** And With Your Spirit.

### Commentator: Behold our fourth Advent Candle - The Candle of Love

 ***The Candle Bearer holds the candle up high and then place it in the Wreath***

**Priest**: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

**Priest**: Today is the Fourth Sunday of Advent and we will light the Candle of Love.

 Last Sunday we lit the Candle of Joy. We light it and the Candles of Hope , Peace and Joy again as we remember Jesus, born in Bethlehem, our hope, our peace and our joy.

***The Senior Server lights the Candles of Hope, Peace and Joy***

**Priest**: Today we light the Fourth Candle of Advent, the Candle of Love. In their old age God gave to Zechariah and Elisabeth a son called John. John spoke to the people bravely in the desert denying his own comforts and prepared to die for what he believed. John taught that we should share what we have with others, treat each other kindly and show Gods love. He did this because he cared for people and wanted them to repent and find God's forgiveness.

***The Candle Bearer lights the Fourth Candle, the Candle of Love***

 Love is like a candle shining in a dark place. As we look at the light of this candle we celebrate the love we have in Christ.

**(P.T.O)**

**Priest**: Let us pray:

**All**: **Lord God, Your witness John the Baptist grew up strong in spirit and prepared people for the coming of the Lord. He loved your people and baptized them in the River Jordan to wash away their sins. Help us to have the same love that we would be witnesses to him and spread the good news of your love. As Christmas draws closer day by day, help us to be ready to welcome him. Amen**

***The Candle Bearer return to floor level of Sanctuary, bow and return to seat.***

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR A**

**GENERAL INTERCESSION**

**Priest:** In Jesus who is Emmanuel: “God-with-us” the loving mercy of the Father is made visible and tangible.

**Reader:** That in times of difficulty and trial for our country, our religious and political leaders may stand firm in their reliance on God who watches over his people,

We pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That fathers of families may be like St. Joseph who is just, concerned for Mary, and open to God’s will.

We Pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That young people may learn from the example of Mary and Joseph, who make Jesus the centre of their lives.

We Pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That all those away from home and family this Christmas may be comforted by the prayers and affection of their loved ones and by the goodwill of their neighbours.

We Pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For all people in this time of drought, for those on farms and in rural areas deprived of harvests and livestock, livelihood and hope. May God send rain to water the earth and help for those in need.

We Pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For those who have died. In particular those mentioned in our parish bulletin. May God’s merciful love shine on them and their loved ones left behind.

We Pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** **Together we now pray our Parish Community prayer for Advent.**

**All:** God of hope, who brought love into this world, be the love that dwells between us.

God of hope, who brought peace into this world, be the peace that dwells between us.

God of hope, who brought joy into this world, be the joy that dwells between us.

God of hope, the rock we stand upon, be the centre, the focus of our lives always, and particularly this Advent time.

**Priest:** God our Father, hear the prayers of your people. As we await with eager longing the coming of your Son, fill us with peace and joy in your presence.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR A**

**MASS READINGS**

**FIRST READING (Is 7:10-14)**

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

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”.’

*The Word of the Lord.*

**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)**

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans*

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.

*The Word of the Lord.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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)**

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew**

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.

**The Gospel of the Lord.**