

**THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**  
**December 22, 2019**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
**Isaiah 7:10–14 † Romans 1:1–7 † Matthew 1:18–24**



**Reflection by: Sister Alice McCoy, OP**

Advent is one of my favorite seasons. I love to sit in the quiet harmony of songs like “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”...close my eyes and envision the candlelight, the pine cones, the beautiful snowfall...and feel God’s arms around me. But then today’s readings bring us to the middle of the reality of what the coming of our savior is really calling us to.

Joseph was a devoted Jewish man. He appeared to keep all the rules and regulations of his faith. But now he gets hit with an unexpected job. This marriage you and Mary were planning to move forward in together has just shifted into a different direction than you ever anticipated. God always seems to shift to include us in the “plan” for the world’s salvation. Inclusivity and collaboration are always imbedded in the way we were set up, in what we were created to be. God promised to always be there for us and asks that we would always be there for him/her. And the way we are there for God is when we are there for each other.

It ain’t easy. Joseph was up all night pondering what was going on. Mary appeared to be stressed out when she first got the call. They are hit with the unexpected. Their human response was, “I’m not going to answer that door! Let God do it himself.” But then the spirit and grace of God flows into them both and they say “Yes.” They wake up and shout “Emmanuel!” God IS with us and will show us the way! We will hold his and our hands and walk in the light of God’s way. God will provide for all that we need when we walk together.