



Year A – 4th Sunday of Advent: Advent: Emmanuel (God is With Us)

***{Start with reviewing the previous meeting's challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

Let's Begin: Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

Opening Prayer:

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read the Gospel: **Matthew 1:18-24** - <https://bible.usccb.org/> - 12/18/2022, 12/21/2025, 12/24/2028

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

Heavenly Father, we can often feel unworthy or intimidated by the life You call us to live. Convict us with Your grace to know that through You we can do anything. Help us to hear what You are calling us to do, moment to moment. Give us the courage and strength to step up and out in faith. Amen.

Reflection or Discussion Question:

1. What resonates with you about this reading?
2. Do you think it was easy for Joseph to do as the angel commanded him?

YouTube Video: OLOSFMI – God Is With Us (7.38 min) -

https://youtu.be/1k6R0tgeaE0?list=PL26Izh_ym_HNfrtXnWiXtgw0xG8oJRedK

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

3. Are there any initial thoughts/feelings the video brought up for you?
4. Early in the video Mike asks the question, “Who wants to be a saint?” Have you ever really considered that question for yourself before? What would be your response? What would you say has or does hold you back from answering in the affirmative?
5. Mike mentions the “Reverence Theory” about St. Joseph and why he sought to leave Mary quietly. Have you heard that theory before? What did you think about it?
6. Have you had any experiences in life when you know God did amazing works or shared amazing words THROUGH you? Please elaborate...
7. What do you think are the biggest “blocks” that keep you from working with God and allowing God to work through you?

Session Challenges: {Choose one or both}

- During prayer time, ask God to reveal to you if there is anything that's holding you back from allowing God to work and speak through you.
- Consider inviting anyone who wouldn't usually attend a Catholic Christmas Mass to attend a Christmas Mass with you.

Closing Prayer: (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.) *Lord God, help us to set aside any feelings and thoughts that keep us from You. Help us to set aside any feelings or thoughts that keep us from doing Your will. Instill in us a deep understanding and trust that we can do all things through You who loves us. With great humility, we come before You and offer you these petitions and prayers...[pause]*

We offer You all of these spoken petitions as well as those we hold deep within our hearts and ask, if it is Your will, that they be granted. Amen.

{Optional additional Readings} Reading 1: **IS 7:10-14**; Reading 2: **ROM 1:1-7**