

# Week Four



Sunday, 22nd December 2019

## A meditation based on Isaiah 7:10-14

*Ask for a sign from the Lord. (Isaiah 7:11)*

Things were looking bad for King Ahaz of Jerusalem. He was barely holding back an attack from the armies of Aram and Samaria. The situation became so desperate that Ahaz decided to appeal to the king of Assyria for help. "I am your servant and your son," he wrote. "Come up and rescue me" (2 Kings 16:7).

Hearing the news, the prophet Isaiah urged Ahaz to reconsider. He knew that bowing to Assyria would mean adopting the nation's false idols and sinful traditions. "Ask for a sign from the Lord," he begged the king (Isaiah 7:11). *Let God help you.*

But Ahaz refused. He didn't want to risk God's wrath by seeming to dare God to prove himself. Besides, he thought, God could not possibly be so good as to rescue him - especially not after all the ways Ahaz had disobeyed him in the past.

Like Ahaz, we too can fear that we have to deal with the challenges of life all on our own. But God is always giving us signs of his presence and his help. Some are subtle, like a beautiful sunrise, and others are more obvious, like the faithfulness of a friend. And then there's the dramatic sign that Isaiah gave Ahaz: "The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

Emmanuel. God-with-us. A living, breathing sign of God's love and protection. A personal, undeniable sign of God's commitment to his people. A promise that he has seen our need and is ready to help if we turn to him.

At Mass today, you'll be surrounded by signs: statues, a crucifix, an altar, and maybe a creche. And of course, the greatest and most intimate of all signs: Jesus, present in the form of bread and wine. He is a sign you not only see but one you can taste and touch. He is the sign that redeems, heals, and restores. So don't be like Ahaz. Welcome this sign. Take it into your heart and soul.

### TODAY'S OTHER READINGS

**Psalm 24:1-6**

**Romans 1:1-7**

**Matthew 1:18-24**



The 4th Sunday of Advent symbolizes Peace with the "Angel's Candle" reminding us of the message of the angels:

"Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

### The Twelve Days of Christmas



The song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is an English Christmas carol. From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the Church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember. [Click here to find out what the Catholic code in the song is](#)

Easy listening Christmas music - Matt Maher's song [Glory \(Let There Be Peace\)](#)

*Pray...* "Jesus, thank you for every sign that you will give me today."