



Call Him Emmanuel

Praying *with the* Prophecies
of the SAVIOR'S BIRTH



FR. EDWARD LOONEY



Introduction

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son, shall name him Emmanuel.

ISAIAH 7:14

Throughout Israel's history, God raised up prophets to speak his word to the people. Their Old Testament messages called for repentance, offered hope and promised the coming Messiah. There are 12 minor prophets and four major prophets, each proclaiming God's truth to a particular people in a particular time. Their words reveal how God was preparing the world for the birth of Jesus and *his* saving message. Many prophecies are central to Advent, such as Isaiah's describing a virgin would conceive and bear a son, calling him Emmanuel. As Catholics, we are reminded of this profound truth every time we enter a church and see the red sanctuary light glowing beside the tabernacle—Jesus, our Emmanuel, is still with us, fully present in the Eucharist.

This Advent, we will pray with these prophetic words of Scripture over four weeks. The first week focuses on the hope and promise of a Savior. The second reflects on different prophetic statements of the coming Redeemer. The third week emphasizes our preparation for the Lord's coming. Finally, in the fourth week, we see how God fulfills his promises to an expectant people.

Are you ready to journey with the prophets in prayer, listening to their voices as they lead us to Christ? Our Advent journey begins now.

Fr. Edward Looney



The First Sunday of Advent

The days are coming—oracle of the LORD—when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days, at that time, I will make a just shoot spring up for David; he shall do what is right and just in the land.

JEREMIAH 33:14-15

Lord our God, our ancestors in the faith long ago waited and hoped for the coming Messiah, the Promised One. Because you sent your Son, Jesus, I know that you are faithful to these promises. At a time you ordained, you sent an Angel to announce the Good News to Mary that she would conceive and bear the Promised One. Thank you, Lord, for your faithfulness. Through the Scriptures, I know the promises you have made for those who believe in you. I wait with the same expectation and hope that you will fulfill those promises in my life.

Please, Lord, do not disappoint. Amen.



Monday of the First Week of Advent

See, days are coming—oracle of the LORD—
when I will raise up a righteous branch for David;
As king he shall reign and govern wisely,
he shall do what is just and right in the land.
In his days Judah shall be saved,
Israel shall dwell in security.
This is the name to be given him:
“The LORD our justice.”

JEREMIAH 23:5-6

Almighty God, the coming of Emmanuel is the coming of our great King, Jesus. Your Son reigns gloriously from his throne in Heaven. I welcome his reign into my life and my heart this day.

Jesus, govern my heart and actions so that they may please you. I dwell in security because I know the Lord has come. I have security because he is the King of Peace.

Come, O King of Peace, Come. Come powerfully into my life.
Amen.



Tuesday of the First Week of Advent

But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.

The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:

a spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

A spirit of counsel and of strength,

a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD,

and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.

ISAIAH 11:1-3

Almighty God, your Son Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was with him, descending upon him at his Baptism and leading and always guiding him. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to his Apostles. Like them, on whom the Holy Spirit descended, I ask that the Spirit of the Lord come to rest upon me now. Make me wise, and give me understanding and counsel. Make me strong and knowledgeable; give me a fear of the Lord.

Come, Holy Spirit, Come. Amen.



Wednesday of the First Week of Advent

Here is my servant whom I uphold,
my chosen one with whom I am pleased.
Upon him I have put my spirit;
he shall bring forth justice to the nations.

ISAIAH 42:1

Almighty Father, these words of Isaiah have been spoken in the Gospels by you at both the Baptism and Transfiguration of Jesus. The One whom you sent, you pointed out to others in the Scripture. These words could be said of Mary, too—she declared herself the servant of the Lord; for God the Father was well pleased with her, as spoken at the Annunciation. As you chose Jesus and Mary, choose me to serve you.

Guide my steps, inspire my words and actions so that my life might be pleasing to you. Amen.



Thursday of the First Week of Advent

It is too little, he says, for you to be my servant,
to raise up the tribes of Jacob,
and restore the survivors of Israel;
I will make you a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.

ISAIAH 49:6

Almighty God, you will that all people be saved. It is for this reason that you sent your Son, Jesus, so that all who believe in him might not perish but have everlasting life. The message of Jesus has gone out to all the world. Please convert those who do not yet believe in Jesus, who do not accept his teachings and who reject his message. Shine the Light of Christ into their lives and hearts so that they will believe.

Make me a light shining in the darkness of the night. Amen.

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Prepare for the coming of Christmas, by first traveling back in time with the Scriptures to pray with the ancient prophecies of the Old Testament that foretell the Savior's birth. Fr. Edward Looney offers readers relevant prayers for our time as he explores the prophetic announcements that lead up to the arrival of Jesus Christ.

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