

**Sunday 24 December 2023**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent Yr B**  
*(Day of Prayer for Expectant Mothers)*

*Liturgical Colour: Violet. Year: B(II).*

**Readings at Mass**

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**Entrance Antiphon**

**Cf. Is 45: 8**

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,  
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;  
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

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**Collect**

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,  
your grace into our hearts,  
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son  
was made known by the message of an Angel,  
may by his Passion and Cross  
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

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**First reading**

**2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16**

**Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me**

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, ‘Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent.’ Nathan said to the king, ‘Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.’

But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

‘Go and tell my servant David, “Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I

will be a father to him and he a son to me; if he does evil, I will punish him with the rod such as men use, with strokes such as mankind gives. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever.”

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### **Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 88(89):2-5,27,29**

*I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;  
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.  
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,  
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.

*I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

‘I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to David my servant:  
I will establish your dynasty for ever  
and set up your throne through all ages.

*I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

‘He will say to me: “You are my father,  
my God, the rock who saves me.”  
I will keep my love for him always;  
with him my covenant shall last.’

*I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

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### **Second reading**

**Romans 16:25-27**

#### **The mystery is revealed that was kept secret for endless ages**

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

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### **Gospel Acclamation**

**Lk1:38**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
I am the handmaid of the Lord:  
let what you have said be done to me.

Alleluia!

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## **Gospel**

**Luke 1:26-38**

### **'I am the handmaid of the Lord'**

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

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### **Prayer over the Offerings**

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord,  
sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar,  
just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
Through Christ our Lord.

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### **Communion Antiphon**

**Is 7: 14**

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;  
and his name will be called Emmanuel.

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### **Prayer after Communion**

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption,  
we pray, almighty God,  
that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer,  
so we may press forward all the more eagerly  
to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

