



Sunday Reflection with Fr. Rafal

Dear Brothers and Sisters of St. Joseph Parish,

Pope Leo XIV, in one of his first general audiences, said, *"The Gospel shows us that there is always a way to continue to **love**, even when everything seems irredeemably compromised."* Those words strike at the very heart of what this final week of Advent is about. Love — true, self-giving, unconditional love — is not a passing emotion or a simple preference. It is not a feeling that changes with the weather or the mood of the day. Love, as Christ reveals it, endures precisely when everything else seems broken or lost.

So, this 4th week of Advent and Christmas Season 2025 is all about that love — God's immeasurable, tender, patient love for His people. It is the love that takes on flesh in Bethlehem. It is the love that never stops giving, that never stops forgiving. The coming of Christ is the supreme expression of divine love. "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). The Incarnation — the Word made flesh — is the beginning of that great laying down.

Christmas is not just about a birth long ago; it's about the continuous outpouring of God's heart into the world. The gift of His Son is not a one-time event. It is the gift that keeps giving, the well that never runs dry. Every time we receive the Eucharist, every time we forgive, every time we show mercy, that same love is reborn in us. He is not simply one of us. He is God with us. He is the living pledge that heaven has come down to earth.

Two thousand years later, that same Emmanuel still knocks — on the doors of our souls, our homes, our hearts. His presence is not a memory but a movement. He stands at the door and waits (Revelation 3:20). As we enter these final days before Christmas, we are called to do what Mary did: to open our hearts to the God who comes, to make space in the inn of our souls.

This week, as we light the final candle of the Advent wreath — the candle of love — let it be our reminder: ***God's love is not cautious or conditional. It is total, tender, and eternal.***

So, this Christmas open the door. Say yes. And let Love — real, uncompromised, divine Love — be born in you.

Have a Blessed 4th Sunday of Advent Sunday!

and Merry Christmas to you and your family!

Fr. Rafal Ligenza,

Pastor — St. Joseph Catholic Church