

Advent Calendar: Day 1

The reflections for this week are centered around the readings for this Sunday's texts
Isaiah 7:10-14, 1 Timothy 3:16, Luke 1:26-38

from Portions from Isaiah 7:10-14

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven..." Then Isaiah said: "...the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the virgin is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel."

While reluctant to ask for a sign, the Judaic King Ahaz is hesitant to trust God's promise of deliverance and blessing without getting one. The sign given is neither abyssal nor celestial, is it from neither the depths nor heights of the soul's experiences. Ultimately, this sign would come far past the time of Ahaz in the death and resurrection of our Lord. But first, that sign occurs in the mystery of Jesus' birth. For us that sign is present: here and now, of flesh and bone, of our time and place: God is immutably with us in Jesus. Should our quest in life ever tempt us to seek confirmation that God cares about our journey, we have been assured that God not only delivers us, He has entered our cares, our journey, and our life itself. Immanuel means "God is with us." This sign continuously directs us to the concrete reality that no matter the highs or lows we experience in life, we are never alone.

We often and appropriately seek confirmation of God's blessing as we pursue particular paths in our life's journey. How does it inform our journey to know that God is not just present within a specific decision but is "with us" as the sign of the promise inherent in the name "Immanuel"?