

Reflection Wednesday 3rd Week Advent 2023

King Ahaz failed to accept God's promise, failed to put his trust in God and, as a result, lost everything. Not only do we turn to God when all other avenues come up blank but we continually want to be reassured of God's presence throughout our lives in both good times and bad. We have promised to be faithful to God, loyal and trusting in our baptism and subsequently whenever we pray the creed and in accepting the sacrament of Confirmation. Loyalty and trust are two vital elements of life and of every relationship, friends and family and in our working relationships especially in business. But these elements can only truly be upheld by love.

It is because God loved us that he sends us his Son Jesus. God even named him Emmanuel to reaffirm that God always wants to be fully part of our lives. God equally wants us to respond with a love that is filled with gratitude, dignity, honour and reverence. Such as we would show our best of friends.

As we prepare for the Jubilee year in 2025, next year, 2024, will be dedicated to **prayer**.

Pope Francis says: *Jesus never abandons, coerces or blackmails anyone when they stray, rather, he patiently waits and is "our greatest and most faithful friend. Jesus remains at the door of the heart. We say, 'No, I do not want to know anything about you.' And he remains silent, he remains there within reach, within heart's reach because he is always faithful.*

Let us see Jesus as our greatest and most faithful friend, who does not blackmail, above all who never abandons us, even when we turn away from him.

Prayer is not "parroting" words, but an opening of one's heart to Jesus, moving closer to him and letting him "enter my heart and feeling his presence. Develop a life of prayer that greets the Lord with the heart, that is simple, friendly and affectionate, and that has "few words" but is accompanied by good deeds and works.