

MARY OF NAZARETH: THE NEW ARK OF THE COVENANT

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 2 SAMUEL 7:1-16; - LUKE 1: 26-38

In the Reading from 2 Samuel, King David is well aware that thanks to God's protection and goodness, he has been victorious over his enemies, he has consolidated his kingdom, and the people of Israel can now enjoy a period of peace. But something is bothering the conscience of the King: how can he continue to live in a rich palace, while the Ark of the Covenant, the visible sign of God's presence among his people, remains in a tent, as at the time of the Exodus, when they were living as nomads and journeying through the desert! King David resolves to build a Temple worthy of God's majesty.

But God cannot be contained among four walls built by humans. Through the Prophet Nathan, God tells him: "Not you, but I will make you a house. I will raise up one of your descendants, and I will establish his kingdom. I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM, AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME. ...YOUR THRONE, DAVID, SHALL THUS BE ESTABLISHED FOREVER."(Verse 14, 16)

This prophecy will come about when the Angel Gabriel is "sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to Joseph, of the HOUSE OF DAVID. The virgin's name was Mary" (Luke 1:26-28).

When Mary gave her consent to become the mother of the promised Messiah, God's presence among his people was no longer symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant inside a tent, but God himself took up residence in Mary's womb through his WORD that became FLESH, thus making her the NEW ARK OF THE COVENANT.

In Mary, GOD kept his promise to David: God prepared for Himself a NEW DWELLING among his people!

Since then, every time, in imitation of the Virgin Mary, we repeat our YES to God's love and receive him in holy communion, we too GIVE BIRTH TO JESUS IN OUR HEART and become his Temple, where God dwells through his Eucharistic presence, the WORD become FLESH! Such an incredible act of God's self giving love, that only He could bring about, because "NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GOD." (Luke 1:37)

WE PRAISE AND THANK YOU, LOVING FATHER, FOR GIVING US MARY AS THE NEW ARK OF THE COVENANT!