

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (C) LET YOUR WILL BE DONE IN MY LIFE

When praying the Our Father we say, 'your will be done on earth as it is heaven'. What is the will of God done in heaven? Revelation tells us that angels and saints sing praises to God day and night (Rev.15:1-4). It was not possible for human beings living on earth to praise God fittingly because of our sins. The blood of goats and bulls were used to offer sacrifices and sin offerings to God but it was not good enough to appease God. He did not delight in it.

This led Jesus to come to redeem us by offering His own blood. He decided to come to do the will of His Father and to teach us the will of His Father. Doing His Father's will meant a total surrender of His own will. He was born in a small town which was insignificant among the tribes of Israel. This was the prophecy of Micah read in the first reading: "You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah, too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler of Israel". So He was not to come from a big city like Jerusalem but from a village. Moreover, He did not come from a palace or rich man's home but from a poor family.

The woman (Mary) who was to give birth to the Saviour followed the example of Her Son. She also surrendered Her will to the Creator. She told the messenger of God: "Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk.1:38). Mary also told God that She was ready to do His will. "By this 'will', we have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," to redeem the world.

When Mary submitted Herself to God's will, She became a source of joy to Elizabeth and John, because She carried in Her womb the Author of Life and source of peace and joy. She won the respect of the old woman, Elizabeth, because, filled with the Holy Spirit, she was able to recognize Mary as the mother of the Lord.

Submitting one's will to the will of God goes with humility. Jesus exhibited that through the place and home He came from, and more importantly, by

taking our human nature. Mary also was very humble. She had the desire to go and serve Her cousin who She felt, needed great help at that time. She did not allow what She was told to make Her feel too big to serve. Elizabeth, on her part, also felt blessed to be visited by the mother of the Lord, even though she was old enough to give birth to Mary. How she welcomed Mary to her home was a sign of humility.

Doing the will of God also entails obedience. Without obedience, it will be difficult to do what He wants you to do, because it involves sacrifice. Jesus obeyed His Father, despite the fact that He knew He was going to suffer. Mary also obeyed the message from God through the angel.

Whose 'will' takes precedence in my life? My will or the will of God? Am I able to do God's will or not? Why is it difficult for me to do God's will? I always want to do my own will because my will and God's will go in opposite directions, and I consider God's will to be too demanding. When God wants me to love, I hate. When He wants me to forgive, I rather take revenge. When He wants me to serve, I want to be served. I want to be given always and keep what I have instead of giving to those in need. He wants me to be humble, but it is difficult for me so I am proud and arrogant. His will is that I become a source of joy and peace wherever I find myself, and to make Him known to all peoples, but this is also a problem for me.

Jesus was faithful to the promise He made to His Father that He was ready to do His will. He showed love and kindness. He brought joy and gladness to many people. He was gentle and humble of heart. He offered Himself to be sacrificed so that all may be saved. His Father's will was that all humanity may find salvation, and Jesus was ready to make that happen.

I can do God's will, sometimes by being obedient to parents and those in authority, provided they direct me according to the statutes of God. Another way is to obey the teachings of the Church.

As the celebration of His birth is very close, I am to remember that once I have decided to be His disciple, I have no option but to know the will of God and try every day to do it. My prayer should always be like, 'God may your will be done in my life as it is in heaven'.