

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent (Cycle B) Homily**  
St. William, Champion | December 20, 2020  
2 Sm 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16 | Rom 16:25-27 | Lk 1:26-38

Deacon Robert Mintus

In all the hustle and bustle of the world around us, it's so easy to get caught up in it all. There are presents to be bought and wrapped, cards to be addressed and sent, and preparations to be made for Christmas gatherings. But today, we're reminded of the most important preparation to be made: Make Room!

David realizes this as he sits in the quiet of his palace. Something is not right. While he is living in splendor, the Ark of the Covenant is residing in a tent. And so he tells Nathan the prophet about his plan to build a house that is appropriate for God. Nathan returns to him with a promise of something wonderful. God will build the house, but it will not be made of brick or stone – instead, it will be made of people. It will be a family and a dynasty - and it will be one that will endure forever.

Years later, God makes good on this pledge as he sends an angel to Mary. Gabriel arrives and greets Mary with the words we are so accustomed to: "Hail, full of grace! God is with you." And as he

delivers those words, we don't know what he is thinking, but scripture scholars suggest that he might have wondered about Mary and why God chose her. She was young, probably in her early teens, uneducated, not well off, barely old enough to have a child, let alone to make such a commitment. He calms her fears with the words "Do not be afraid." He listens to her concerns, and explains how God's plan will unfold in her life, assuring her that nothing is impossible with God. But it is ultimately her decision to be a part of God's plan. And as we know, Mary doesn't hesitate in her response... Let it be done to me as you say.

Today we are reminded of the special relationship that we have with God, and we're reminded of his continuing desire to have a relationship with us and use us in His plan. Just like Mary, we have our doubts and concerns. Who are we that God would come to us? We are just sinners. We don't have any special qualifications; we are just ordinary people who struggle each day. Our lives are rarely perfect, they're usually messy and complicated. We think we're too young, or maybe too old, or maybe we're not worthy. And just like

with Mary, our vision of what can be is limited. God reminds us, “Do not be afraid.” Our faith assures us that with God, nothing is impossible; even if we can’t conceive it, he can do it. But ultimately, it is our decision to be a part of God’s plan. God loves us enough to allow us the freedom to decide.

So, with only five days left before Christmas, we are reminded of that last thing on our list to do to get ready, and it’s the most important one... We always seem to find the time to shop for and wrap all the presents, to bake (or find someone who bakes) all the cookies, to put up the tree, all the lights and decorations, and to address and mail all those cards. Have we made room in our schedule, our lives and our hearts for God? Will we let Him build a home in us?