

## 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### THE LORD WANTS TO LIVE WITH ME

December 17/18, 2022

Who do you feel comfortable to live with, and who is the one you would not like to stay with you? Why? The Lord wants to live with you and me. At the time Ahaz was the king of Judah, some Canaanite kings wanted to wage war on Judah, but God assured king Ahaz not to be afraid, because He would rescue him. Later, He told Isaiah to tell Ahaz to ask for a sign. But Ahaz was not ready to do that. Then God promised a Son from the house of David.

The promise was fulfilled in Jesus; He is the Emmanuel, and the Virgin mentioned is Mary. God indeed, wants to stay with us and He wants us to contribute to His coming and finally give Him a place in our lives. St. Joseph had the desire to be part of the coming of Emmanuel. He was ready to take care of the Son to be born and the Virgin to give birth to Him.

The life of Joseph should help us know what to do as Christians waiting for the Messiah. He was obedient to the word given to him by God and acted on it. He was patient and thoughtful. The decision to divorce Mary quietly was an indication that he wanted to protect the dignity and integrity of Mary. As we heard, he was “unwilling to expose Her to shame”. He put the interest of Mary above his.

God is willing to stay with me and guide me, but do I also have the desire to be with Him? As St. Paul told the Romans, all are called to belong to Jesus Christ including Gentiles, and God wants everybody to be holy. It is when we desire to be holy that God can dwell with us.

Why does God want to be with you and me? We are His children, created in His own image and likeness. And also, it is because we are prone to the attacks from the evil one who wants to destroy us. God wants to bring us back to Himself to enjoy the good things we have lost. He knows that without Him we can do nothing, (Jn.15:5); we cannot save ourselves, even though many a time we think and behave as if we are masters of our lives.

Some of us react to this message that ‘God is with us’ in the same way as Gideon did when the Angel of the Lord appeared to him: “The Angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, ‘the Lord is with you, valiant warrior!’ Gideon replied, ‘Excuse me, my lord, but if the Lord is with us, why is all this happening to us? And where are all the miracles which our ancestors used to tell us about?’” (Jg.6:12-13a). But it is

exactly in our hopelessness that the Lord wants to live among us. He wants to bring us hope and fulfil our hearts' desire. "Taste and see that the Lord is good".

The Lord wants to stay in our hearts. He wants to be part of my daily decision-making. He wants to be part of my ministry and what I do every day. He wants to be part of your work and live with your family. His desire it to come into your marriage to help you find peace and true happiness. Emmanuel wants to live with you to give you the wisdom and knowledge you need in your academic work and studies.

When I allow Jesus to dwell with me, He is going to help me to overcome all anxieties and worries in my life. His presence will drive away fear and we will be filled with courage to be able to say yes to doing good and no to doing evil. What preparation have I made for His coming, since His coming is close at hand? The lights are already lit; the parcels are in the post, and the shopping is in progress; what about the cleansing of the heart and mind? Will I feel happy and comfortable seeing Jesus at my door next week?