

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent  
December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Cycle B

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** 2 Samuel 7:1 – 5, 8b – 12, 14a, 16.

God created everything with a plan in mind.

**Psalm Response:** Psalm 89:2 – 3, 4 – 5, 27, 29.

Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** Romans 16:25 – 27.

God's great secret is made manifest.

**Gospel:** Luke 1:26 – 38.

God's plan took place in due time.

God is good, **all the time**, All the Time, **God is good**.

Christmas is inching ever closer 5 (6) days away; is anyone excited yet? Has this Advent time of waiting helped you to open your heart to give birth to the Christ in our world, after all as I believe Thomas Merton said: "we are all called to be the Mother of the Christ?" This is the real miracle of the Incarnation: God with us – Emmanuel as well as God within us. It is in this sense that we like Mary are chosen to be "temples" of God, a holy space in which God can dwell. Come Lord Jesus.

I am reminded of the story, myth, I heard years ago, of a very old holy monk, we'll call him, Brother Alfred, one day Alfred was praying in his cell. He looked out the window and saw a disheveled woman with a special need's child begging for help from people passing by in the hope of getting some food for her malnourished little child. It was clear that she was a victim of a severe beating. Seeing this situation Alfred intensified his prayer turning to God he prayed: "Great God, how is it that such a loving creator who has abundant love for all, how can you see such suffering, and do nothing to assist this mother and child?" Suddenly deep within his heart, Alfred received God's reply, "I did do something about it: I created you placed you where you are."

I think the story of Bro. Alfred summarizes the message of our scriptures for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent. We have each been created by our loving God uniquely and individually, and quite mysteriously for that matter, to carry out God's will. To say "Yes" as a young 14 year old girl did. To understand and believe that absolutely nothing is impossible for our God, is at the root of this YES! Our Baptisms (this is where the mystery enters) open up a great opportunity for each of us, but with great opportunity comes great responsibility. Come Lord Jesus, Come!

Denise Levertov's poem, *Annunciation*, ends with what the Christian tradition call's "Mary's fiat" (Latin, "let it be"). Levertov writes:

She did not cry, "I cannot, I am not worthy"  
Nor "I have not the strength."  
She did not submit with gritted teeth, raging, coerced.  
Bravest of all humans,  
Consent illumed her.

.....  
Consent,  
Courage unparalleled,  
Opened her utterly.

(*A Door in the Hive* [New York, New Directions, 1989])

What we hear today describes a Mary, a young, frightened girl, who in complete faith offers herself as a handmaid, a servant. Each of us must do the same if we want to see the transformation of our world this Christmas, only 5 days from now. Remember "nothing is impossible for God." Come Lord Jesus Come!

God is good, **all the time**, All the time, **God is good**

The Church this time of the year (Octave before Christmas) prays the O antiphons. **(Saturday)** O root of Jesse's stem, come to save us without delay. **(Sunday)** O Key of David, open the gates to our heavenly home.