

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT—Year B—M12-D20-Y2020

01. As we get closer and closer to the great Celebration that is Christmas—the Church gives us this powerful and profound reading from the Gospel of Luke — a reading that is my very favourite in ALL the Scriptures — a reading that reminds us about the essential role of Our Blessed Mother in our salvation — how it is through Mary that the Incarnation took place—how it is THROUGH MARY that Jesus was able to partake in our humanity, so that we could partake in HIS Divinity.
02. For when John the Apostle wrote these words: *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*—it was MARY’S FLESH that the Word of God became. And so, today’s Gospel is a beautiful reminder of how God truly became one of us—experiencing all the challenges and limitations of human nature — how God came to live among us—experiencing all the hardships and trials of earthly existence — and how God came to be with us—to be with us in our pain, our loneliness, our poverty—even in our depravity.
03. For this reason, today’s Gospel is also a reminder that God incarnated Himself into our PERSONAL reality—into our PERSONAL existence—so that He is very much with us in our personal joys and sorrows—in our personal victories and tragedies.
04. And it’s not that God needed Mary to accomplish this—but that He chose to come among us through a human mother. Jesus could have come into the world any way He chose—He could have simply appeared among us in the flesh — but He chose to come to us through Mary—to have the same experience of having an earthly mother and a human family that we have.
05. And because Jesus was humble enough to come to us through Mary—we should be humble enough to go to Him through Mary as well — for just as the Son of God came to us over 2000 years ago through Our Blessed Mother—EVEN NOW, IN THE PRESENT—He

continues to come to us **THROUGH Our Blessed Mother** — which is why She is also known as the **Mediatrix of ALL GRACE**—because **ALL blessings and ALL graces we receive from God CONTINUE to come to us through Her.**

- 06.** This is also the reason why it's **so important** for us as **Disciples of Christ, and children of God to honour and revere Mary**—the same way we honour and revere those throughout history who have made a positive impact on the world—**the same way we honour heroes who have changed the world for the better** — because without Mary, the greatest event in human history—**the event which FOREVER CHANGED our collective and personal histories for the better**—the **Incarnation of God's Son**—would not have taken place.
- 07.** And so, we honour Mary because it is good to honour our heroes — **AND, apart from Christ Himself, Mary is the greatest hero of our faith.**
- 08.** And there is **no competition or jealousy between Jesus and Mary** — because **everything we say about Mary is always a reflection of what we believe about Jesus**—and Mary Herself would be the **very first** to acknowledge that — **ALSO because the more we love and glorify Her Son—the more Mary is pleased** — and the more we honour and revere His Mother—**the more Jesus is pleased.**
- 09.** The Protestant mentality with regards to Mary is that God simply used Her to give Jesus a human body—**and then didn't really have any more use for Her after that.** But, again, Jesus could have easily just appeared among us in the flesh—**He didn't have to use Mary to give Himself a human body.**
- 10.** Which is why the Catholic mentality with regards to Mary is very different — **the Catholic mentality is that God's plan for Mary involved FAR MORE than simply using Her to give Jesus a human body** — that God had a very special vocation and mission for Our Blessed Mother—that God wanted Mary to work very closely with

Him—to be His **most exclusive, exalted, and privileged Partner** in bringing about the salvation of humanity — **not just in the past, but in the present—not just collectively, but PERSONALLY.**

11. And so, when God asked Mary to be the Mother of His Son—to allow the **Incarnation of His Eternal Word to take place through Her** — **He was asking Her FAR MORE than to simply be the biological mother of Jesus** — He was asking Her to be His very special partner in His Plan to save the world—and in His Plan to save **EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US.**
12. This is why **Mary’s YES to God at the Annunciation was the most important YES in all of human history—and in our personal history as well** — because Her Yes to God was **MAN’S definitive YES to God’s offer of salvation—a definitive YES that opened the gates of Heaven—and allowed the Son of God to come into the world, and to come to each of us personally**—forever changing our collective and personal histories for the better.
13. And again, God **didn’t choose Mary because He needed** someone to help Him save the world — **God chose Mary because He wanted to INCLUDE human beings in His Plan of Salvation** — and so, God doesn’t use Mary to bring about His Plan of salvation **because He NEEDS TO—but because He WANTS TO** — just as He **CONTINUES** to use Her to bring about His plan for our personal salvation.
14. This is **ALSO** why we should honour and revere Mary—because She is not only God’s **exclusive partner in our collective salvation—but in our personal salvation as well.** For God continues to use Mary to bring about our **personal healing and transformation—our personal victory over sin, suffering, and death.**
15. And, as God’s most privileged partner in the Work of Salvation—**Mary has a very special relationship with the Blessed Trinity** — for She is the perfect daughter of the Father—the perfect Mother of the Son—and the perfect Spouse of the Holy Spirit — and so, She **has a special relationship with God like no other person in existence** —

and it's because of this that Her prayers on our behalf are SO POWERFUL, and why we should invoke Her Intercession often — because **God would never refuse anything that Mary asks of Him.**

16. For Mary is not only the **perfect Mother of Jesus—She is also the perfect Disciple of Our Lord**—and was there at all the KEY Moments of Jesus' Life—**following Him all the way to the Cross—suffering right along with Him for the salvation of the world, and the salvation of each of us.**
17. And because of this, She now shares in Her Son's Resurrected glory like none other — because like Her Son, Mary did the **Will of God perfectly at all times and in all things.**
18. So, as we draw closer to what will be a different and challenging Christmas for most of us—Our Lord invites us to look to the Heart of Mary—to say YES (along with Our Blessed Mother) to God's Plan of Salvation.
19. Because God **ALSO** wants to include **EACH OF US** in His Plan of Salvation—not only in terms of our personal salvation—but for the salvation of **our parish, our country, and our world.**
20. And because **contemplating the Heart of Mary is a great way to prepare for Christmas, especially for the unique Christmas we are facing** — because everything I have said about the Mother of God was made possible **because Mary conceived of the Word of God so perfectly in Her Heart FIRST AND FOREMOST**—which is why She received the great privilege to conceive Him in Her Womb as well.
21. In other words, it is because Mary's Heart was **ALREADY SO FULL with the Love of God and His Word**—that the Incarnation of the Eternal Word was able to take place through Her.
22. For, when we look to the Heart of Mary, we see a heart full of **faith and trust even in the midst of uncertainty** — a heart full of **hope and gratitude even in the midst of hardship** — a heart full of **great peace even in the midst of great pain—and of great joy even in the**

midst of great sadness — a heart fully aware of Her poverty, Her limitations, and Her utter dependence on God.

23. ALSO, when we look to the Heart of Mary, we see a heart **full of humility even when She had every reason to boast — a heart full of love, even when She had every reason to hate — a heart full of enormous courage even in the midst of overwhelming fear — a heart willing to receive ALL THINGS from the Hand of God—THE GOOD AND THE BAD—with joy and thanksgiving — a heart completely in love with God and His Will even in the midst of a world in love with FALSE GODS AND WITH SIN.**
24. In other words, when we look at Mary, **we see a heart FULL OF GRACE.**
25. And, as we prepare for the Coming of the Lord at Christmas, God **invites us to look at OUR OWN HEARTS as well—because all relevant change begins FIRST AND FOREMOST in the human heart.**
26. And so, if we want to make important changes for the better, both in our **OWN LIVES and in the lives of others—we need to make important changes in our OWN hearts FIRST AND FOREMOST — for all good and evil behaviour flows from the human heart.**
27. And Mary is the best way to accomplish this—to transform our hearts for the better—**because Her Mission to be God’s most privileged Partner in our PERSONAL SALVATION continues EVEN NOW in Heaven — and because She is the surest path to God Who is THE SOURCE of all change for the better.**
28. And so, on this the 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT—as we approach the **great Feast of Christmas—let us look to Our Blessed Mother—Who is the perfect example of how to receive the Word of God and conceive Him in our hearts—for it is ONLY through Mary, through Her prayers and example, that the Incarnation of God’s eternal Word will take place in us as well—allowing us to participate in HIS DIVINITY — allowing us, like Mary, to be full of faith and trust even in these uncertain times — to be full of hope and gratitude even in**

the midst of challenges and hardships — **to be full of great peace even in the midst of great pain—and of great joy even in the midst of great sadness** — to be fully aware of our UTTER DEPENDENCE on God.

29. And, as we approach the beginning of a new year—let us **not look back on what was—but forward on what COULD BE** — let us make this our most important resolution—to **draw closer to the Mother of God, so that we can draw closer to Her Son** — to entrust our heart to Hers — **to live in Her Heart—and to have Her Heart live in ours.**
30. Because speaking from personal experience, **Mary has been the most important factor in deepening and enriching my relationship with Jesus.**
31. And because, when we look to the Heart of Mary—we see **not only a heart after which to model our own heart—we see a heart in which to fully immerse ourselves** — a heart to entrust our lives and our loved ones — a heart to entrust our **cares and worries, our aspirations and hopes** — a heart to entrust our **healing and our salvation** — a heart, in a sense, to make our home — because it is in the Heart of Mary that we will have **the most powerful, profound, and life-changing experience of God**—and it is in the Heart of Mary that we will find **our life, our sweetness, and our hope. AMEN.**