

## **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Advent is almost over and Christmas is at our doorstep. The Lord is at hand.

David built himself a palace of cedar wood in Jerusalem and was living a life of peace and contentment. He felt ashamed for providing for himself while the Ark of the Covenant—God’s throne—had no lasting abode.

So in today’s first reading we got know David’s decision to build a befitting house for God.

The prophet Nathan agreed with David’s plan to build a temple. But that night the Lord told the prophet to inform David that this was not his wish. The Lord recalled all he had previously done for David and promised peace to him and his people. Yet for his own reasons, the Lord did not want David to build him a temple. The Lord promised David a lasting dynasty.

David’s kingdom would last and direct descendant of his would sit on his throne forever.

The point is not what David would do for God, but what God would do for David and therefore for all of David’s people. God showed David that he could never repay God and that God intended to do more for him. God would not simply make David famous, but give him an heir whose kingdom would endure forever. That is, what God was really building up in his people was a way to dwell among them. To dwell among us was God’s intention from the beginning of creation when he created Adam and Eve.

In the gospel reading, see the angel Gabriel greeting Mary in these words: **Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.**”

Through Mary God wanted to dwell with us again. She was to give birth to the Son of the Most High who would sit on the throne of David his father forever. That is, by giving birth to Jesus God would come to us, be one of us and to stay with us forever. And God would aid Mary in carrying out the role he had assigned to her.

The celebration of Christmas is the celebration of the presence of God who came among us to save us.

What does it mean to celebrate the presence of God among us? It means we need to be alive to good and loving relationships with God.

That is, we need to deepen our relationships with God and accept his plans for us.

We need to say yes always to God’s call and renew our commitment to our Christian life. We need to respond to God’s love and make it know to everyone.

Saint Paul in the second reading tells us that the incarnation; the presence of God among us is made known to us so that we will accept and follow Christ in obedience to the will of God, by living the Christian faith.

Today, the first and the last day of the fourth week of advent is suitable occasion to look right into our hearts, to see how we stand with God.

Let us remember that the courage, faith and trust of Mary helped her to rise to the occasion when she was told that through her the Son of the Most High would come and dwell among us.

Dear People of God, our Courage, faith and trust should help us to overcome the challenges of our Christian lives in order to be alive always to good and loving relationships with God.