

# Our Faith on Sunday

## LITURGY

### 4th Sunday of Advent (B)

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:** Cf. Is 45:8  
**Drop down the dew from above, you heavens,  
 and let the clouds rain down the Just One;  
 let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.**

#### FIRST READING:

II Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16  
*The kingdom of David will always stand secure before the Lord.*

**PSALM:** Ps 88.2-5, 27, 29. R. cf v2

**R) I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.**

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;  
 through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.  
 Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,  
 that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. (R)

'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
 I have sworn to David my servant:  
 I will establish your dynasty for ever  
 and set up your throne through all ages.' (R)

He will say to me: 'You are my father,  
 my God, the rock who saves me.'  
 I will keep my love for him always;  
 with him my covenant shall endure. (R)

**SECOND READING:** Romans 16:25-27  
*The mystery, which was kept secret for endless ages,  
 is now made clear.*

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

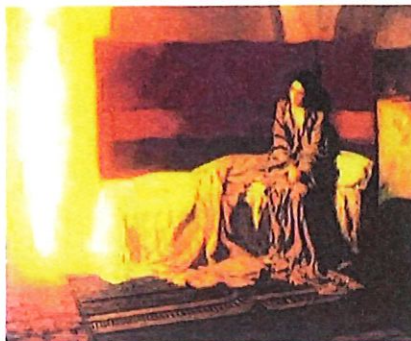
**Alleluia, alleluia** Lk 1:38  
**I am the handmade of the Lord:  
 let what you have said be done to me.  
 Alleluia**

**GOSPEL:** Luke 1:26-38  
*Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son.*

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:** Is 7:14  
**Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;  
 and his name will be called Emmanuel.**



## GOSPEL REFLECTION



This week's Gospel takes a step backwards. For the last two weeks we have been hearing about John the Baptist, but now we hear about how Jesus was conceived in the Mary's womb and how her cousin, Elizabeth is expecting a child, John the Baptist. Who knows what Mary really felt like when Gabriel told her she was to become the mother of the Messiah. It says that she was deeply disturbed – not a surprise really! But then she seems to have accepted it as the will of God having been reassured by the angel Gabriel that she would conceive not in the ordinary way but through the Holy Spirit. There appears to have been no argument about it, no objection. Mary simply replies: "let what you have said be done to me." In accepting to be the Mother of the Word, Mary lives the Word of God

and from that moment on she both gives birth to the Word physically and 'becomes' the Word spiritually by living it. Sometimes we find it difficult to see Mary as a model for us as she seems to be so perfect. We are not so perfect, but we can always turn to her, first and foremost as a mother, and a mother will always love beyond the failures and weaknesses of her children.

### EVANGELII GAUDIUM (JOY OF THE GOSPEL)



#### POPULAR VS. POPULIST

161. Another sign of the decline of popular leadership is concern for short-term advantage. One meets popular demands for the sake of gaining votes or support, but without advancing in an arduous and constant effort to generate the resources people need to develop and earn a living by their own efforts and creativity. In this regard, I have made it clear that "I have no intention of proposing an irresponsible populism".<sup>133</sup> Eliminating inequality requires an economic growth that can help to tap each region's potential and thus guarantee a sustainable equality.<sup>134</sup> At the same time, it follows that "welfare projects, which meet certain urgent needs, should be considered merely temporary responses".<sup>135</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 204; AAS 105 (2013), 1106.  
<sup>134</sup> Cf. *ibid.*: AAS 105 (2013), 1105-1106.  
<sup>135</sup> *ibid.*, 202; AAS 105 (2013), 1105.

## The Fire of Love\* LOVE RATHER THAN KNOWLEDGE

Loving is more important than talking and discussing things. Love delights us and sweetens our conscience because it draws us away from lesser pleasures and the pursuit of our own glory. We have to be strong and ready to take on hard things for God, glowing with the fires of wisdom and love. Like St Paul we must cry out: 'For me to live is Christ and to die is gain' (Phil. 1: 21). Those who really love God show it by the way they live. To be expelled from attaining the bliss of heaven, rather than knowing Jesus in joy and jubilation, is folly. On the other hand, people who are poor in this

world, but seek Jesus, will know unending happiness. They sing together with the heavenly choir in rich melody.

People who have loved God on earth can die without regrets and enter into eternal praise. But too many are anxious for knowledge and discussion. Shame on them! An old woman can be a greater expert in the love of God than the professional theologian. To pursue learning so as to gain a reputation or get an official Church position doesn't merit anyone the title of 'Doctor' but rather of 'Fool!'

\*The Fire of Love by Richard Rolle Published by Aeterna Press

