

Fourth Sunday of Advent 2020

My beloved brothers and sisters, on this final Sunday of Advent, the Church reminds us of the Annunciation, the moment and time when the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God in the Flesh, fulfilled the Promise of God made to us in His prophet Isaiah, that He would give us a Virgin who would conceive Emmanuel, the Aramaic name that means: God Who Remains With Us. Later, the Church would give the Virgin the name: Theotokus, the Greek name that means: The Bearer of God; for God is always faithful to His promises!

There are two Divine Mysteries revealed to us on this day: The first is the mystery of God becoming a human being, a man like us in all things except sin. This mystery, the self-revelation of Who God is to us, reveals the infinite humility of God, the Creator of all that exists, becoming one of us: Emmanuel, God who remains with us in human flesh, God made visible to us! God reveals what is means when St. John teaches us: "God is love!" The Incarnation is the Infinite Love made visible; and that Love is the ultimate self-giving of God to us, always, because God, in Jesus, remains with us, Emmanuel!

The second Divine Mystery, is that God asks for our cooperation in His Salvation for us! He will not impose His Will upon us! In the Gospel for today, our God asks Mary, invites her to become the Mother of His Son. It was entirely possible for her to say no to God's invitation, after-all, Adam and Eve were perfect, they were asked by God for a humble submission to His Divine Will as our Creator, and they both said no!

Mary could have rejected the invitation, and we would still be locked into damnation and eternal death as a race. Because it took a man and a woman to bring damnation and ruin into the creation by their "no"; it would take a woman and a man to say: "Yes," to the Divine Will. And, the Divine Will is for our communion with God and each other in the Son of God become flesh! Mary's response shows us what that Divine communion is: "I am the handmaiden, I am your slave Lord, be it done to me according to your Word!" At that moment, God reversed Adam and Eve's No! We are never more free then when we are God's servant!

In the same way, the Son of God who has saved us, (that is the meaning of the name: Yeshua: God saves us.), asks us to cooperate with His Divine Will for us, Communion with Him for all eternity. The Son made Himself the Servant, to free us and to have Divine Communion with us.

Like Mary, we too are free to say: No! Pope Benedict reminds us: God takes the initiative; however, He will not carry it out without our active cooperation. That is how much God loves us. Will you say “Yes”, or “No!”?

We still have room to prepare for Him Who Comes to Remain with us, Emmanuel. Let us ask Theotokos, Mary, to prepare our hearts, and let us prepare ourselves for our Eternal Communion with Him: if you do not pray, begin to pray, if you are not repentant, repent, if you need forgiveness, seek it out in Confession, if you are not serious about your relationship with God and His people, get serious!