
21 SUNDAY

4th SUNDAY of ADVENT, YEAR B

2 Sam 7: 1-5, 8-12, 14,16

Ps 88: 2-5, 27, 29

Rom 16: 25-27

Luke 1: 26 –38

“Let the clouds rain down the Just One, and the earth bring forth a Saviour” (from ch.45 of the Book of Isaiah): words for the Entry Song of the Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent. The longed-for Saviour is about to appear: the promise made to David and the Lord’s people through him (2Sam7) is about to be fulfilled; the ‘mystery kept secret for endless ages’ (Rom.16) is about to be revealed: an angel of God tells a young virgin in Nazareth that the Holy Spirit will come upon her and she will bear a son who will be great. After such long waiting, such grand promises, such great titles, in the final act there is no fanfare, no great wondrous miraculous spectacular “appearance”, no ‘media extravaganza’ such as modern PR people would dream up, no lights and noise and excitement such as surrounds commercial Christmas now. The contrast, even in the scriptures, is so striking. The great Coming of God takes place in an unknown, poor Palestinian village, with the help of a young girl who is a nobody. It seems impossible: but it’s just one of the seeming impossibilities surrounding the Christmas event. Of course, the angel did say that “nothing is impossible to God”. And that’s the Christmas message of hope and peace: there is a Saviour, but He comes in completely unexpected ways. May we who believe that God really has come among us always marvel at the quiet wonder of His coming, and share Mary’s wonder and joy with others. “I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me”.

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