

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"MARY SET OUT EAGERLY..."

1st Reading: Micah 5:1-4a | Psalm: Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 | 2nd Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10 | Gospel: Luke 1:39-45

Song: O Emmanuel

Mary Visits Elizabeth

In those days, Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. **And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.**"

WHAT ARE THE WORDS THAT HER HEART IS TELLING US?



Anne-Laure Lavagna - The Word in the Heart

The pierced side of Jesus is the source of the love that God had shown for his people in countless ways. Let us now recall some of his words:

"Because you are precious in my sight and honoured, I love you" (Is 43:4).

"Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even if these may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands" (Is 49:15-16).

"For the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed" (Is 54:10).

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you" (Jer 31:3).

"The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives you victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing" (Zeph 3:17). *Dilexit Nos # 99*

The prophet Hosea goes so far as to speak of the heart of God, who "led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love" (Hos 11:4). When that love was spurned, the Lord could say, "My heart is stirred within me; my compassion grows warm and tender (Hos 11:8). God's merciful love always triumphs (cf. Hos 11:9), and it was to find its most sublime expression in Christ, his definitive Word of love. *Dilexit Nos # 100*

The pierced heart of Christ embodies all God's declarations of love present in the Scriptures. That love is no mere matter of words; rather, the open side of his Son is a source of life for those whom he loves, the fount that quenches the thirst of his people. *Dilexit Nos # 101*

Responsorial Psalm | Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19.

R. Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hearken, from your throne upon the cherubim, shine forth. Rouse your power, and come to save us.

Once again, O LORD of hosts, look down from heaven, and see; take care of this vine, and protect what your right hand has planted the son of man whom you yourself made strong.

May your help be with the man of your right hand, with the son of man whom you yourself made strong. Then we will no more withdraw from you; give us new life, and we will call upon your name.



Reflection from the Association for Friendship, which runs shared apartments, where people who were homeless and those who were not, live together.

The dimension of humility in Elizabeth. She recognizes this omnipotence and declares herself happy with the fulfillment. She acknowledges the power and authority of the Spirit within her body, from the Lord. A small being who is not yet born, she recognizes His authority—extraordinary listening.

One word: humility.

These two children are children of God's love for humanity. God tells us, **"It is I who does all things."**



Anne-Laure Lavagna - "Heart of Jesus"

She went with eagerness, showing obedience to God. The Lord comes before us. He came before and comes after us. He precedes us and comes after; He is among us. Where does this voice that precedes us come from, which anticipates our acquiescence, provoked by a "free" word? It surpasses us. Something precedes us; God commands us, God guides us. It is not just a matter of time; it is a reversal of time. God was there before us. God, creator of the Earth.

We all go through difficulties; it increases our faith within us. Sometimes we are so tired that we do not seek help. Without this faith, as soon as we face difficulties, we fall. Lord, may your kingdom come into my life.

God can give this charism of faith to everyone. The most beautiful of charisms is faith. From there, doors open.

Words of love

The pierced side—the seat of love—demonstrates God's love. Faith without works is dead. God has SO loved the world. Mercy will always prevail. I am loved, I am forgiven, I am touched. The pierced side within us is at the same time the seat of love.

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The encyclical in action: *This week we invite you to pay attention to the WORDS*

Anne-Laure Lavagna - "Echoes"



Although the Scriptures preserve Jesus' words, ever alive and timely, there are moments when he speaks to us inwardly, calls us and leads us to a better place. That better place is his heart.

There he invites us to find fresh strength and peace:

"Come to me, all who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28). In this sense, he could say to his disciples, "Abide in me" (Jn 15:4). Dilexit Nos # 43

Jesus' words... On various occasions, he demonstrated a love that was both passionate and compassionate. He could be deeply moved and grieved, even to the point of shedding tears.

It is clear that Jesus was not indifferent to the daily cares and concerns of people, such as their weariness or hunger: "I have compassion for this crowd... they have nothing to eat... they will faint on the way, and some of them have come from a great distance" (Mk 8:2-3). Dilexit Nos # 44



Prayer of intercession: *We pray that the spirit of peace and hope fill our hearts and spread throughout the world, bringing joy and harmony to all.*

Song: [See I'm near – Taizé](#)

