



4th Sunday of Advent, Cycle B

2 Sm 7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16
Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

Monday December 19

Judges 13:2-7,24-25a
Ps 71:3-6ab,16-17
Luke 1:5-25

Tuesday December 20

Isaiah 7:10-14
Ps 24: (7c,10b)1-6
Luke 1:26-38

Wednesday December 21

Song of Songs 2:8-14
or Zephaniah 3:14-18a
Ps 33:2-3,11-12,20-21
Luke 1:39-45

Thursday December 22

1 Samuel 1:24-28
1 Sm 2:1,4-8
Luke 1:46-56

Friday December 23

Malachi 3:1-4,23-24
Ps 25:4-5ab,8-10,14
Luke 1:57-66

Saturday December 24

2 Sm 7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16
Ps 89:2-5,27,29
Luke 1:67-79

Today's Gospel shows us how the mission of Christ affected the Virgin Mary even before Jesus was conceived in her womb.

Three decades later, Jesus would become the Savior of the world. However, that is not when his salvation plan began. Jesus is God; he has always existed. He is the uncreated Divine Son, the Person of the Holy Trinity who, as we proclaim in the Nicene Creed, was "born of the Father before all ages, God from God..."

His salvation plan could – and did – impact Mary since the moment of her own conception.

In order for God to come into our world in the flesh, his Spirit totally bathed Mary in his pure, holy presence. Therefore, even though she could not understand how the promised Messiah could be conceived within her,

since she'd had no sexual relations, by the grace of God's Spirit she could know that God was the one who was asking for it and God was the one who was doing it. That's all she needed.

All of us are called by God to carry the presence of Christ and birth him more fully into the world. What are you doing about it? How much are you fulfilling your divine destiny? Remember, he always empowers us to accomplish whatever he asks us to do. God knows what he's doing when he calls us to continue what Mary began, and he is always trustworthy and de-



pendable. There is nothing to fear, no reason to hold back from fulfilling our true destiny.

With this in mind, when he asks us to do something for his kingdom, of course our answer is yes, right?

Why wouldn't it be? Of course we want to cooperate

with his plan, and we say yes to his plan even when we don't understand it nor see how God could possibly do what he says he'll do.

Often, we don't feel like he can do what he's planning to do through us, because we know we are weak, sinful, and unqualified. Don't trust your feelings about it; trust God.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. When was the last time you said to God, "But how can this be? You want me to do *what*? I don't understand why!"
2. What were you afraid of? How strong was your trust in God?
3. When God chooses you for a task or responsibility, what helps you move from uncertainty or confusion or reluctance into saying "yes"?
4. When the plans of God don't make sense or they seem unpleasant, how do you overcome your reluctance?