

HOMILY FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B

1. Within us there is a desire for accomplishment
 - a. If we are capable and someone is important to us, we would like to impress them
 - b. Even more so if that person is God
 - c. We would like to do something great for God
2. That seems to be how David is feeling
 - a. God has helped him win his battles
 - b. He is comfortably established in a fine palace
 - c. Here I am living in a palace and the Ark, symbol of God presence is in a tent
 - d. I should build a fine house for God
 - e. Prophet Nathan at first agrees but then gets revelation
 - f. Tell David who do you think you are to build me a house
 - i. It is not for you to do things for me
 - ii. I have made you who you are
 - iii. I will build house, a dynasty, a kingdom that will last forever
3. Difficulty for Israel comes when David's descendants become corrupt
 - a. Then the country is led into exile in Babylonia
 - b. Kingship is destroyed
 - c. Hope of a Messiah begins to arise
 - d. God has promised to take care of His people
 - e. Promised to do this through the line of David
 - f. Many had probably lost hope in this promise
 - g. How could a king arise from line of David, especially facing the might of the Romans
4. Just when it seems most hopeless that God would fulfill this promise
 - a. Angel Gabriel appears to Mary
 - b. Simple girl from Nazareth, pledged to Joseph but not yet married, alone in a room
 - c. Suddenly mysterious presence, an archangel is present in the room with Mary
 - d. Strange greeting: Hail full of grace, or highly favored one, God is with you

- i. Angel is saying to her she has been chosen and uniquely blessed and favored
 - e. Easy to see why she might be troubled and wondering what this all means
 - f. Angel says Do not be afraid, God has chosen you to be instrument of his fulfilling his promise that all had given up on
 - g. You are going to have a child, this child will be the Son of the Most High
 - h. He will take the throne of David, his father and establish an unending kingdom
 - i. Mary ask how can this happen, I am not even married
 - j. Angel assures her that God will do what seems impossible
 - k. As proof her older cousin thought to be barren is with child
5. As we approach the season of Christmas, we enter into a time of mystery
 - a. Instead of worrying about what we can do, how we can succeed at life God is asking us to trust in Him
 - b. If he wants great things from us, He will give us what we need
 - c. In fact we should be open to wonders from God
 - d. Mary was completely blindsided by God, no way she could have predicted any of what the angel told her
 - e. We can learn from Mary to listen for what God may be saying to us
 - f. At any time in our life, whether young like Mary or old like Elizabeth
 - g. God may be wanting to use us in surprising ways
 - h. Like the heroes of the bible, God may have duties for us to fulfill
 - i. If we hear the whisperings of God in our heart, we may think how can I do that
 - ii. God may also tell us, do not be afraid
 - iii. By the power of the Holy Spirit nothing is impossible for God as long as we are willing to say with Mary, yes, let it be done to me according to your word.