**TUESDAY DECEMBER 21 – IV WEEK OF ADVENT [C]**

**"Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.”**

**The Virgin Mary knows what God has done for Elizabeth: He has made her mother in her old age. From barren and advanced age woman, He has ensured that she became mother. Mary sets out and travels to visit her cousin Elizabeth. She lived in a town of the hilled country of Judah. No one still knows the mystery that is fulfilling in the Virgin Mary. No one knows that in Nazareth. No one knows out of Nazareth. Elizabeth ignores what is happening in Mary and through the means of Her. She knows nothing of her vocation to be Mother of the Lord. The “haste” of Mary has a theological value, prior to charity. Even if someone had known of the mystery of Mary, no one has arrived to Elizabeth before Mary. It also has a value of charity: one must not procrastinate the good tomorrow. Charity must be done in haste, without lingering, at the moment of need of the other. Charity is always driven by the need of the other, never by our little comforts.**

**The head of family is Zechariah. Mary enters the house of Zechariah. Holiness never annuls truth. The respect of the truth is what always attests our greater holiness. Today in families this order is neglected, very neglected, almost ignored, forgotten, despised, vilified in the name of an equality no longer founded upon the will of God, but upon the temptation of man and of woman. This unlived order manifests and reveals our little holiness, our little obedience to God. It attests that families are not founded on God, but on man and on his changing thoughts. Without the respect of the order established by God for all the human genre there is no society one may edify. God, too, respects his order. He always respects it. Let us note: Mary does not speak to Elizabeth. She says nothing to her. No other word has come out of her lips.**

**What is the fruit of this greeting, or what fruits does this greeting produce? The infant leaps in the womb of Elizabeth. Elizabeth is filled with Holy Spirit. The Spirit that placed upon Mary on the day of the visit of the Angel now places on Elizabeth and over the infant she was carrying in her womb. What is happening now in the house of Zechariah is only work of the Holy Spirit. The Actor is the Spirit of God now. Everything is fulfilled by Him. The Virgin Mary carries the Holy Spirit. She carries and gives Him. She carries and bestows Him with a simple greeting. The many or few words are not what produce, then. Who produces is only the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit must also be carried by the human person, though. Holiness is the true means of the Spirit of the Lord. What is the Spirit of God carried and given by the Virgin Mary doing now? The Holy Spirit makes Elizabeth prophetess. Elizabeth sees the mystery that has been fulfilled in the Virgin Mary and she says it. She knows who the Virgin Mary is: the blessed among women. The fruit of her womb is blessed, too. Why are the Virgin Mary and the fruit of her womb proclaimed as blessed? They are proclaimed blessed because the Virgin Mary is the Mother of her Lord, of her God. She is the Mother of God. In the Old Scripture those women who carried out great things for their people are proclaimed blessed. The great things consist of the destruction of the enemies of Israel. Blessed among women is Jael. Judith. Jael killed Sisera. Judith severed the head from Holofernes. The Infant the Virgin Mary is carrying in her womb is the God of Elizabeth, her Lord. He is the Messiah of God. Being the Mother of the Messiah is the blessing among the blessings. It is the highest glory given by God to a woman. There is no greater glory than that. It is a glory that shines before the entire creation. The Holy Spirit gives Elizabeth the knowledge of the mystery of the Virgin Mary and of the Infant She is carrying in her womb.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 1,39-45**

**During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."**

**Elizabeth does not know by science and human doctrine and not even by news coming from men. Elizabeth knows by revelation from high, by enlightening of the Holy Spirit, by his motion. What happens in Elizabeth will have to be the paradigm of the entire life of the Church. It is up to the Church to bring the Holy Spirit into the world as the Virgin Mary brings Him. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the disciple of Jesus will carry out all things. The Holy Spirit shall enlighten, convince, clarify, give wisdom and intelligence, open mind and heat to the sound and holy acknowledge of the mystery.**

**A disciple of Jesus without the Holy Spirit, deprived of Him, will go into the world with his sole strengths and these will be useless with regard to intelligence from men of the mystery of faith whose He is the bearer. The Spirit of the Lord is the Author and the Actor of the salvation of hearts. However, the Spirit must be brought by the disciple of Jesus. Who is then the disciple of Jesus? He is the bearer in the world, among his brothers, of the Holy Spirit. The Virgin Mary thus becomes the model, the image of the true disciple of Jesus, who is a bearer of the Holy Spirit.**

**The Holy Spirit not only constitutes Elizabeth prophetess and proclaimer of the Virgin Mary and of the Infant, He sanctifies the infant who is in the womb of Elizabeth. The Spirit fills the infant with Himself in the womb of the mother and he rejoices. He exults as he enters the salvation of his God. And this all happens for a simple greeting, for a sound of voice. The greeting and the voice are of the Virgin Mary, though, who is entirely filled with Holy Spirit. When a person is full, filled with Holy Spirit, a smile, a gaze, a caress, a greeting, a touch is enough… It is also enough to touch him and everything changes. The heart whispers and the limbs too and they rejoice as everything is touched by the grace of the Spirit of the Lord. The uttered words are not what change the person. The Holy Spirit who touches the person and fills him with himself is the one who carries out the change, who converts, heals, enlightens, opens the heart to truth and intelligence to the mystery.**

**Not only is the Virgin Mary proclaimed blesses among women, She is also said to be blessed. The blessing is most pure gift of God. That the Virgin Mary is the Mother of the Lord is most pure grace, most pure mercy, most pure bestowing of the Mighty One. The beatitude is instead fruit of the reply, fruit of faith, fruit of acceptance of the Word. The Virgin Mary is blessed as She has believed. What has She believed in: that the Lord would have manifested in Her all his omnipotence and would have made Mother of her Lord without knowing any man. The beatitude is fruit of faith accepted and lived. The blessing of God alone does not make us blessed. The blessing, that is accepted and lived in fullness of faith, of charity, of hope makes us blessed. The mistake of a lot of contemporary Theology is precisely in that: in identifying beatitude and blessing, ignoring that the blessing is pure grace, the beatitude is fruit of the grace of God. The fruit of the beatitude is the eternal joy that is the fruit of our faith in the vocation – this is the true blessing – God has done to us. Ignoring this distinction is ignoring the fundamental, essential truth of the Gospel. Mother of God, descend to visit the Church and bring the Holy Spirit in it.**