**18 DECEMBER – FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT [A]**

**"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."**

**Before the Lord shows us the way in a particular, special situation of our life, there is some space so that our mind argues, reasons, evaluates, discerns, decides, always respecting the letter and the truth that the Holy Spirit has placed in each Word of God, though. Joseph finds himself before an event that overwhelms his life. Mary is waiting a child. He decides to get out of Mary’s life, choosing the most righteous and holiest way: that of divorcing her quietly. His choice respects the will of God contained in the Scripture. But is this the will of God for his today, too? Should he divorce her or should he take her as his wife? As a righteous and god-fearing man, he considers the ways so that Mary does not suffer any damage neither moral and nor physical from his decision. Thinking the greatest good to do from our heart in every moment of our existence is a holy thing. However, we must always ask the Holy Spirit if this is the good wanted and thought by the Lord for us. This is why, always, every decision, even the holiest one, must arise from the prayer, must always be accompanied and also followed by the prayer. After having intensively prayed, invoking the Holy Spirit so that He lets us know the divine will, we can take every decision according to righteousness and it is according to righteousness if it respects both the letter and the spirit of truth and of love placed by the Lord in his divine Word. Without prayer, without meditation, without reflection, without desire to choose the best thing for us and for the others, certainly our decision is neither just nor holy. It does not respect the canons of truth and of love dictated by the Lord so that each of our decision be according to the divine will. Knowing the divine will is also fruit of our prayer. One must ask God for this fruit with ongoing prayer.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 1,18-24**

**Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.**

**If while we are evaluating each thing, the Lord comes, He, directly or through the means of one of his Holy Angel, to reveal what his will is, then there is no space for the mind. Every faculty is taken away from it. It can no longer argue, nor reason, neither think nor evaluate the things. After the Lord speaks, there is only space for a full and perfect obedience so that what is asked is done. Here is the failure of our faith. If, after the Lord has spoken, we put our mind before the Word of the Lord, we attest that our faith is dead. And always dead is the faith that does not immediately turn the Word the Lord turns to us into obedience so that we act according to what is asked to us. After the Word has been uttered, the mind must be put apart. The Lord has shown his will. That will must be done. Other wills do not belong to God. To our mind belongs the choice of the holiest and wisest way, in the Holy Spirit, to do the divine will manifested, revealed, communicated to us according to fullness of truth. Joseph listens to the Word that the Angel turns to him. He rouses from sleep and does what is asked. There is not even a moment in him that separates the listening from the obedience. He neither asks the Angel. He listens and obeys. The Lord has spoken. Do you want that, Lord? I will do that. In this the obedience of Joseph is similar in all to the obedience of Jesus the Lord: “Then I said, “Here I am, I have come, it is written about me in the scroll, I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.” (Psal 40, 8-9). In this obedience is the salvation and the redemption of the world. This obedience also measures who great our love for the Lord is. Perhaps, does the love for the Lord not begin from scarifying our mind, putting it entirely in the hands of our God? When our mind is placed before the Word, the Gospel, a command received, it is the sign that our faith is dead. With a dead faith, one will never fulfil the works f the Lord. In Joseph his mind dies and the salvation surrounds earth through him. Jesus has been conceived in the womb of the Mother through the work of the Holy Spirit. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, Joseph, giving him his name, makes him his flesh and his blood. Unsayable mystery. May the Mother of Jesus make us of most pure obedience.**