

the temple where the Lord is dwells

Prayer Centre

Use the violet cloth, add a blue cloth as a foundation.

Place the Advent Wreath close to the opened Scriptures. Light three candles (two violet and the rose one).

The statues of the Holy Family from the crib can be added to the prayer focus.

Read the reflection as the last candle is lit.

*He alone is wisdom;
give glory therefore to him.
Romans 16:-27*

May our relationship with God who came to deepen and enrich the spirit within us be celebrated in and through our lives.

First Reading

Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16

King David was settled in his palace, and the Lord kept him safe from all his enemies. Then the king said to the prophet Nathan, "Here I am living in a house built of cedar, but God's Covenant Box is kept in a tent!" Nathan answered, "Do whatever you have in mind, because the Lord is with you." But that night the Lord said to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David that I say to him, "You are not the one to build a temple for me to live in.

"So tell my servant David that I, the Lord Almighty, say to him, 'I took you from looking after sheep in the fields and made you the ruler of my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have defeated all your enemies as you advanced. I will make you as famous as the greatest leaders in the world. I have chosen a place for my people Israel and have settled them there, where they will live without being oppressed any more. Ever since they entered this land, they have been attacked by violent people, but this will not happen again. I promise to keep you safe from all your enemies and to give you descendants. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him as a father punishes his son. You will always have descendants, and I will

make your kingdom last forever. Your dynasty will never end.' "

Did You Know?

David was a brilliant and capable person who won many wars. He wanted to honour God who was always with him, by building him a temple in Jerusalem.

God told the prophet Nathan to tell David that he (God) had lived in a tent since the Israelites came out of Egypt. Living in a tent meant that God was living within the community of the Israelites. No matter where they went God would be with them. The tent was a symbol of the presence of God.

David abandoned his hope of building a great temple and God promised him that he would become the father of an everlasting dynasty.

Reflection

How can I be a 'house of God' to people in this last week before Christmas?

Psalm

Psalm 88: 2-5, 27, 29

Response: **For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.
R.

'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
I will establish your dynasty for ever
and set up your throne through all ages.' **R.**

He will say to me: 'You are my father,
my God, the rock who saves me.'
I will keep my love for him always;
for him my covenant shall endure. **R.**

Reflection

In what ways has the Lord shown that He dwells in my life?

Second Reading

Romans 16: 25-27

Let us give glory to God! He is able to make you stand firm in your faith, according to the Good News I preach about Jesus Christ and according to the revelation of the secret truth which was hidden for long ages in the past. Now, however, that truth has been brought out into the open through the writings of the prophets; and by the command of the eternal God it is made known to all nations, so that all may believe and obey. To the only God, who alone is all-wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever! Amen.

Did You Know?

We understand that the apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Romans from Corinth. The reading is the last paragraph of the letter and a summary of the whole letter to the Romans.

Paul emphasized the fact again and again that everything is centered on Christ, the heart of the matter. Christ is wisdom and strength and the one to be followed. This is how life is to be lived.

Reflection

The plans we have are not always the same ones God has for us. Think of something that did not go to plan in your life, which the Lord turned to good for you.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the servant of the Lord:
may his will for me be done.
Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David.

Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!" Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus.



He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God.

The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!" Mary said to the angel, "I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you.

For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do." "I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it happen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Did You Know?

Mary is the tent where God will make his dwelling. She comes from the tribe of Levi, the tribe that was chosen by God to be the priests and to be responsible for looking after the Commandments given to Moses, which were kept in a tent when the people of Israel were travelling in the desert.

The Spirit of God rested on the tent and in the same way the Spirit of God came to reside with Mary, both bringing new life to people and fulfilling the covenant made by God.

Reflection

Mary responded with faith and trust to what God asked of her and he rewarded her by making her the temple where His Son would dwell. In what ways can I respond like Mary did, so that the Lord can dwell in me?

Action This Week

As Christmas is all but upon us, take a quiet time to be with God and ask yourself what is the best gift I can give to others on behalf of the baby Jesus?