

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,
December 20, 2020**

GOD WITH US



We are on the last and fourth Sunday of Advent. These four Sundays helped us to better prepare for the coming of Jesus. This coming that we hope for the end of time, at the end of history, remembering, for now, his first coming becoming a man. In this context, it is important not to forget the contrast and complementarity of the readings proposed in this Sunday's liturgy.

First, there is a contrast between the first reading and the gospel text. The extract from the 2nd Book of Samuel (1st reading) presents us with David expressing the desire to build a house for God, a house similar to the palace he built for himself, and God's response in the mouth of the prophet Nathan. More than a house, God wants to remind David of everything He did for him, for the People of Israel and confirms all the promises made. However, the extract from the Gospel of St. Luke tells us

the announcement of Archangel Gabriel to Mary, thus telling us about the "house" that God chose to become present in humanity, to live among us; not in a building, but "with us". This presence presupposes the consent of humanity itself, expressed in Mary's positive response to the invitation that God gives her to be the mother of her Son. These two readings, like the fragment of the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans (2nd reading), tell us about the continued presence of God among us. There is, therefore, a complementarity between them.

God enters the life of humanity, the life of our Christian community, the life of each Christian discreetly, without noise, without evident expressions of power or magnificence, without imposing himself. The Lord becomes present silently. For Him, our answer is enough. Our Christian community, where we take the walk of faith, the same one that helps us to live the faith, is the ideal environment to manifest, discover and celebrate this presence and the proposal of life that God makes for us through Jesus Christ.

Attentively at your service in our Lord,

Father John Carlos