**4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT [21st December, 2014]**

READINGS: 2 Sam. 7:1-6, 8-12/ Romans 16: 25-27/ Luke 1:26-38

THEME: TO GOD BE THE GLORY

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

St. Paul,in the second reading, exhorts us to give‘**glory to him** [God] who is able to give us the strength to live according to the Good News…He alone is wisdom; **give glory therefore to him** through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen (Rom. 16:25-27)!’ To **give God the glory** is a message which runs through today’s readings.

In the first reading (2 Sam. 7), King David, aware that God had given him more than he asked for, decided **to build a temple to the glory of God**, but God set this aside and rather blessed King David more than he could even imagine: giving him an everlasting throne – with the Son of God becoming the son of David.

Likewise in the gospel reading (Lk. 1:26-38), the young woman, Mary, had decided to lead a life of dedication to the **glory of God**, but God surprised her: she became the very mother of the Saviour, the Mother of the Son of God, the Queen of Heaven – an everlasting Queen-ship!

HOW TO GLORIFY GOD (LESSONS FROM DAVID AND MARY).

There are many ways by which we can glorify God. Let’s, however, limit ourselves to the following four points from the lives of King David and Mother Mary:

**Acknowledging one’s humble beginnings**: To give God the glory, we have to, like David and Mary, acknowledge our humble beginnings. David was conscious of the fact that he was a mere shepherd of the flock of his father, before God elevated him to the throne. Mary, likewise, humbly acknowledged before the angel Gabriel that she was the ‘handmaid’ or ‘maidservant’ of the Lord.

**Availing ourselves for God’s use:** When the angel announced to Mary how God wants to engage her to save mankind, she responded: ‘…Let it be done to me according to your word’ (Lk. 1:38). Thus she availed herself like an instrument in God’s hand. In a similar way, we can also glorify God.

**Using our resources to the honour of God**: King David decided to use the riches of his kingdom to build a temple to the honour God. Though God does not really need our material resources (as is clear in David’s story), we give him the glory, when we make use of our resources to foster worship of him, to aid the spread of the good news, or to promote other ventures to the honour of God.

**Believing God can do more than we expect**: David, for instance, believed that the Lord who empowered him as a shepherd to kill lions and bears would empower him to defeat the fearsome Goliath (1 Sam. 17:34-37). Mary, in turn, accepting the assurance of angel Gabriel that ‘with God nothing is impossible’ (Lk. 1:37), believed that she would conceive without knowing a man, and what is more, she would give birth to the Son of God! We also give God the glory when our faith-attitude is that, being God, he can do more than we ask for or can imagine, for nothing is impossible with him!

WHEN WE LEAD OUR LIVES TO THE GLORY OF GOD, HE GLORIFIES US THE MORE

Beloved, when, like King David and (most especially) Mother Mary, we lead our lives to the glory of God, he glorifies us the more. Let us consider some instances of leading our lives to the glory of God and receiving more and more of God’s blessings:

* Student →becomes a teacher →becomes the head →receives the glory of heaven;
* Student →an office worker → the manager →CEO →glory of heaven;
* Young girl → married woman →happy marriage →glory of heaven.

Our achievements may not be realized as easily as lineally presented above. For instance, a diligent and god-fearing teacher may go through a lot of difficulties. He/she may even be unlawfully denied of his/her promotion. However, if he/she remains steadfast in his/her faith in such situations, it is a **glorification in disguise**; for Jesus saw his passion and cross as his glorification (*cf*. John 12:24-28). In such cases, **God will ultimately remove in heaven the veil that disguises his/her glory**.

CONCLUSION

Beloved, in all circumstances (good or bad), let us give ‘**glory to** [God] who is able to give us the strength to live according to the Good News…He alone is wisdom; **give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ** forever and ever. Amen!’