

6. December 2025

THE ADVENT JOURNEY

Day 7: "The birth of the Lord is near"

"But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." (Gal 4:4–5)

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to the Virgin Mary in Nazareth, and this was a decisive moment in the history of salvation. In His love, God chose from among His people the person to whom He would entrust His own Son. She was a woman who, as we know with certainty thanks to the dogma of the Catholic Church, was preserved by God from original sin.

While Eve fell into the seduction of disobedience, Mary placed all her trust in God and gave Him a loving response, thus fully unleashing God's work on behalf of humanity. By saying "yes" to God's will, Mary became the mother of the Son of God.

"And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end. (...) The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.'" (Lk 1:30–33, 35)

Let us allow this event to sink deeply into our hearts: God includes a person in His plan of salvation to the point of making her the Mother of His Son, who was to be born in Bethlehem. How much grace and closeness the Lord grants us! And how wonderful is the response of Mary, whom God also made the true Mother of all believers!

Now, with Mary and Jesus entrusted to the care of St. Joseph, we are very close to Bethlehem. All that remains is the time a child needs to grow in the mother's womb until ready to be born.

Sacred Scripture also tells us that, after conceiving the Son of God in her womb, Mary went to her cousin Elizabeth, who in turn was carrying the Precursor, John the Baptist, in her womb (cf. Lk 1:39–56). Filled with joy and the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth exclaims:

“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.” (vv. 42–45)

And Mary responds joyfully:

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.” (vv. 46–49)

Shortly thereafter, Mary and Joseph set out for Bethlehem. Let us listen to the words of the Gospel of Luke that are so familiar to us:

“In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.” (Lk 2:1–5)

Now that the Birth of the Lord is imminent, we close this first week of Advent and return to a deeper reflection on this event as we stand at the doorstep of Christmas, when the Holy Family is already in Bethlehem and seeking shelter.

Before we reach that point, we will focus on the theme “The Birth of the Lord in Our Hearts” during the coming week.

Meditation on the Gospel of the Day: <https://en.elijamission.net/2023/12/09/>