

## The Second Sunday after Christmas - St. John 1 v 1 – 18

### The Word made Flesh

Our Gospel this Sunday is from the great prologue of St. John's Gospel, the opening verses of the testimony of St. John that, in Christ, the Eternal Word of God has become Flesh in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, "full of grace and truth".

The first day of the new year begins with the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, and we celebrate Mary as Mother of the Eternal Word, who gave birth to the Truth and whose lap was the Seat of Wisdom. The wisdom of our fallen world comes to pay homage to the Divine Child in the persons of the Wise Men (the Magi) and when "they saw the Child with Mary His Mother, they fell down and worshipped Him" ( St. Matthew 2 v 15 ). They adore the Truth and venerate Mary as the one who has conceived the Truth in her Womb and in whose lap the Word of God is secure and loved, adored and to be worshipped.

We are told that when Mary heard the testimony of the shepherds of the angelic choir that "to you is born this day, in the City of David, a Saviour Who is Christ the Lord" praising God and singing, "*Gloria in excelsis Deo – Glory to God in the Highest, and peace to His people on earth*", Mary "treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart". ( St. Luke 2 v 19 ). Mary here is our great example. She gathered together in her heart all these revelations – she pondered the Word made Flesh, she contemplated and adored the Truth. Her "philosophising" was worshipful. Here we see that the true vocation of the philosopher and thinker is not just to seek after the truth but to treasure it and to adore the truth – to be open to the fullness and the splendour of the truth. The Word has made His home among us – "the true Light that enlightens every man" (v11) has come into the world, "full of grace and truth" (v14).

May God grant us a hunger and a thirst to know that Truth and Light and Grace. In the words of the Psalmist, "Send down Your Light and Your Truth, let these lead me, let them bring me to Your Holy Mountain and to Your Dwelling" ( Psalm 43 v 3 )." Bow the heavens, O Lord, and come down! Touch the mountains that they may smoke!"(Psalm 144 v 5f ).

In the year ahead may we be enabled, by God's grace, to begin to ascend the Mountain and enter into the deeper knowledge of God which is both a deep darkness hidden from us and, at the same time, a light in the darkness, so that St. John of the Cross can rejoice in the dark night of the soul as he ascends the mountain because it is "a night more lovely than the dawn!" (" oh noche amable mas que el alborada!"). As we lose ourselves in God so we find ourselves or, as he says elsewhere, "in order to arrive at knowing all, desire to know nothing" (" para venir a saberlo todo, no quieras saber algo en nada").

Through the uncertainties, the darkness, the challenges of the year ahead, may the Lord send down His Light and His Truth in a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit and enable us to begin that ascent to Him Who dwells shrouded in deep darkness, in "light inaccessible" and "hid from our eyes". May the prayers of Mary, Mother of God, Mother of the Truth, Seat of Wisdom, obtain for us, from her Divine Son, the Word made Flesh, the Gift of the Holy Spirit and in the challenges and uncertain days which lie ahead of us, may God renew us and remould us and fill us with His Holy Spirit. Come Holy Spirit! Come Lord Jesus!

*"Holy Spirit, Lord of life, from the clear celestial height, Thy pure beaming radiance give. Come Thou Father of the poor, Come with treasures that endure, Come Thou Light of all that live!"*

" O most pure Virgin Mary, who in the Immaculate Conception became the chosen tabernacle of Divinity by the power of the Holy Spirit, Pray for us. May the Holy Spirit come soon, And renew the face of the earth.

O most pure Virgin Mary, who in the mystery of the Incarnation, became the true Mother of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, Pray for us. May the Holy Spirit come soon, And renew the face of the earth.

O most pure Virgin Mary, who while praying together with the Apostles in the Cenacle, were filled with the Holy Spirit, Pray for us. May the Holy Spirit come soon, And renew the face of the earth.

May Your Holy Spirit come, O Lord, and may He transform us interiorly with His gifts. May He create in us a new heart, so that, in all things, we may please You and accomplish Your Most Holy Will. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."