

Commentary to the 4th Sunday of Advent (A)



Jesus, the God with us

The son of the virgin Mary has a double name, one used by his contemporaries—Jesus, the one who frees from sin—and the one Matthew, the Evangelist gives him: Emmanuel, God with us.

The first great heresy was introduced by a brilliant dialectic of the fourth century, Apollinaris of Laodicea. He claimed that Jesus had a human body, but not a soul like ours. He feared that, by granting him a full humanity, his divinity would come out blurred. He made a big mistake. He took him away from our world, from our condition. He deprived him the second name, that of Emmanuel.

In the expression of John, “the Word was made flesh” (Jn 1:14) the term flesh indicates not only the corporeality but the whole human being understood in its appearance of weakness, fragility, and limits imposed by the fact of being a creature.

In Mary, the Only Begotten of the Father is not only covered with muscles but is fully inserted in our human condition. He had feelings, emotions, and passions. He experienced the joys of affections and disappointments of betrayal. He shared our anxieties, sorrows, humiliations, ignorance, satisfaction in learning and also our fear of death. Not that he just united himself to a real body, but really became a man like us in everything except sin. For this, he is Emmanuel, God with us.

To internalize the message, we repeat:

“You came among us, Lord, to remain with us forever.”

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