



A Miracle On The Way

The four weeks of Advent take us back liturgically to the nine-month pregnancy of the Mother of God. With her we long for the invisible to become visible for all the world to see and hear and hold. With her we marvel at the mysterious gestation of the Word made Flesh in her womb. For the Eternal Son of God “was *incarnate* of the Virgin Mary,” as we say every Sunday in the Creed.

The Son of Mary took flesh from her flesh—that is to say, from *our* flesh, yours and mine. But we learn from the *Catechism* that the Incarnation of the Son of God “does not mean that Jesus Christ is part God and part man.” Not at all. “He became truly man while remaining truly God.” Mary’s Son is as truly and fully human as He is truly and fully God. In His divinity He is “consubstantial with the Father”; in His humanity He is consubstantial with us. Put “incarnate” and “consubstantial” together and you get the name for Jesus we associate with Advent: “Emmanuel,” which means, “God with us.”

The Son of God is Emmanuel because He *wants* to be. You and I had no choice in our flesh-taking; our Creator called us into being without giving us a say in the nature of our human existence. But God the Son *chose* to be “with us” from all eternity. “He did not cling

to equality with God,” St. Paul says; rather, He “emptied Himself” to be born as one of us and to dwell and die among us. The Second Person of the Trinity willingly became consubstantial with us so that we might willingly become fully human in Him. This we do when we open our lives to His coming as Mary did and thereby prepare a place for the Incarnation to continue in us.