

God's Dwelling Place



*I*t is not by chance that the Feast of Mary, Mother of God, is also World Peace Day. In fact, the presence of the Spirit, which fills the heart and womb of Mary, reminds us that we will have peace only if we allow ourselves to be inhabited by the mystery we celebrate at Christmas, God-with-us.

Human beings have always sought God's dwelling place—a place in which to live in peace, a place that is home even to those obliged to migrate to distant lands. Even the disciples of John the Baptist asked the Lord, "Rabbi, where do you live?" (Jn. 1: 38)

For centuries we have tried to build a house for God, who instead chose to "become flesh" not so as to take up residence in a specific place but so as to dwell among all human beings, in the depths of our lives. What he said to David prophetically, he also says to every person: "I will build a house for you" because "unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (cf. Ps. 127). But even more tenderly he says to Mary, "I will make you my dwelling place"—his living Tabernacle.

The prophecy the Lord made to King David holds true for each one of us, who are called to become the dwelling place of God: "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them" (Jn. 14:23).

The Lord is knocking on our door. Every time we open it and are asked to offer hospitality to the person standing there—be it friend or stranger—we are assailed by fears, questions, doubts. Love Incarnate wants to dwell in us, but he does not force himself on us. He awaits our consent without compelling it, accepting the risk of being rejected. His question—through the person standing before us—is very simple: "Can I come in? I want to give you my peace."

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Prayer

Lord, you chose to dwell among human beings.

Lord, you are ready to welcome everyone.

Lord, you build a home for us in your Body.

Through the intercession of Mary, your living Tabernacle, permeate us with your own feelings and give us peace. Amen.