

Homily – San Jose Mission 300th Jubilee

February 19, 2020

God is full of surprises! Today's Scripture readings and our celebration of this Jubilee confirm this.

Thousands of years ago, an old man and woman were planning to retire. But God surprisingly told Abraham and Sarah, who had not been able to have children, to go on a journey that would lead to a new land, a new nation, and blessing for all the nations of the world. They were persons of faith and believed God's promises.

David, a young shepherd whom God had chosen to be king of Israel, had been very successful against his people's enemies and decided to build a temple for God. God, however, said no. Instead, God promised that someone of David's descendants would always sit on the throne of God's people. David trusted God's word.

Joseph was a good and just man, a hard worker, who fell in love with Mary and planned to marry her. We can only imagine his confusion and disappointment when he learned that she was pregnant – and not by him! As a devout observer of the Law, he could not proceed with the marriage. However, because of his great love for Mary, he compassionately arranged for a quiet divorce.

Then, in a dream God explained Joseph's very surprising role in the history of salvation and he takes Mary as his wife. It is easy to assume in hindsight that everything was very clear and glorious from that moment on. The reality was undoubtedly quite different. But his trust in God's word enabled him to undertake a difficult mission. Joseph is a descendant of Abraham and David and plays a significant but quiet role in the fulfillment of the promises and hopes that God had given to them.

As we gather in this historic, sacred place, we recall the history of our salvation and are challenged by the faith, trust, and love of those who have gone before us. Three hundred years ago Fray Antonio Margil de Jesus led the Franciscan missionaries from Zacatecas to build this Mission San José y Miguel de Aguayo. With its humble beginnings, they could not have foreseen the three centuries of Catholic worship and life that we celebrate today.

At the same time, we are called and challenged to have **faith** and to see people and events as God sees them – **hope** in God's promises that justice and peace will eventually prevail in our world – and **love** of God and neighbor despite the difficulties we may encounter along our pilgrim way.

God is full of surprises, and God is with us today! Our Lady of Guadalupe has promised to be with us always. We do not walk alone. We journey as a community of faith, hope, and love – trusting in God’s promises for a future of justice and peace. The risen Lord is in our midst! Those who have gone before us in the faith are with us with the heavenly hosts praising God! The Holy Spirit leads and guides us! *Ven, Holy Spirit, Ven!*