

Tuesday 8th December 2020

Advent, Tuesday of 2nd week

Reading: Lk.1,30-37

V.37 *“For no word of God will ever fail.”*

“It is not plausible, is it really, that things actually happened this way. Virgin birth and all that? I mean, let’s get real!” So faith is challenged. And often in response faith retreats to that place called “real” in order hopefully to remain of interest to those who dwell there.

Mary too in her query to Gabriel was guided by what is plausible in the real world and what is likely not (though she was no determined sceptic). What happened next is highly instructive. Gabriel, in a manner of speaking, took her by the hand and walked with her a little so that he might give her a view on ‘faith’: “We are not dealing in plausibility here, dear Mary, but in certainties. Take the case of Elizabeth who is now in her sixth month and will soon deliver a child. That this should happen was completely off the plausibility scale. Yet happen it did. And should you not know why? Should you not know that she received a word from God and that this word made the thing inevitable? His word inevitably brings about what it says, always. He is, after all, God. And the real? – is only that.”

Faith does not deal in the plausible as identified by the human mind, but in the certainly that attaches to every word from the mouth of God. The “real” is no constraint on faith, it is there only thanks to God’s word that goes before it. “And God said ... And it was.” So faith is a trusting in God’s word and when it is that a maker of new things.

So important, then, to come to the ‘word made flesh’ of John 1, 14, to whom Mary gave birth.