WALKING THE PATH OF ADVENT WITH THE WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

A path of patience, courage and trust

Sara had been given in marriage seven times but all of her husbands, had died on entering the bridal chamber. This daughter of Israel was possessed by the demon Asmodeus. Insulted even by a servant, Sara feels that she has no way out and contemplates suicide. Then she realizes that this would only cause even more pain to her father and so she prays to God: " Blessed are you, merciful God! Blessed be your holy and honorable name forever! May all your works forever bless you. Now to you, Lord, I have turned my face and have lifted up my eyes. **Bid me to depart from the earth, never again to listen to such reproaches** […] Seven husbands of mine have already died. Why then should I live any longer? But if it does not please you, Lord, to take my life, look favorably upon me and have pity on me, that I may never again listen to such reproaches! "(Tb 3,11-13.15). The Lord hears her cry and sends the angel Raphael to heal her, giving her in marriage to Tobias son of Tobit, a just and devout man.

Sara, wife of Tobias, helps us to look upon this Advent season with **patience**, that patience she was capable of having despite the sad trials she had to face, but also with a **brave heart, ready to do all that is asked of her when God knocks at the door**. Sometimes we believe that patience and courage are opposites - one fosters waiting, the other action - but the figure of Sarah shows us that it is important to discern when to do one or the other. Surely the fear of losing an eighth husband, Tobias, was great but Sarah did not hesitate and both of them felt the need to **entrust this hazardous step to the Lord together in prayer**, revealing the righteousness of their hearts and invoking His mercy to help them to grow old together.

May patience, courage and entrusting our choices and our lives to God accompany our steps to the cave of Bethlehem this Advent.

(2° week of Advent)