



**Prayer for Vocations
March 25, 2022**

Reading from the Gospel of Luke 1: 26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And he came to her and said "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at this saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?"

And the Angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who is called barren. For with God, nothing is impossible."

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done according to your word." And the angel departed from her. The Word of the Lord.



Reflection:

To contemplate the Virgin Mary in Nazareth is to contemplate the image of a human person fully realized in God. With her generous "Yes" Mary shows us all that we can become if we welcome her word with faith.

God wanted to make Him/herself known to us and that is why God chose to become INCARNATE in Mary, a simple woman, and did so without making a spectacle of Her/himself in a moment of personal encounter, in prayer. This is how God reveals Him/herself to us in the silence of our heart.

In the greeting, the first thing God tells her is "**Rejoice**" and it is also the first thing we should hear because the only thing the Lord wants is our happiness...The Lord is always Good News.



When joy is lacking, faith loses its freshness, cordiality disappears, friendship grows cold. Everything becomes more difficult.

“The Lord is with you” is a confirmation that the Lord makes to Mary and to us, that we are not alone in this adventure of following Him that He proposes to us.

“Do not be afraid.” We have many fears and they can paralyze us as followers of Jesus. Let us think, what are the fears we have?...that prevent us from walking toward the future with hope, that lock us into the sterile preservation of the past, that feed our ghosts. Also fear of renouncing affections, material things, etc...let's give them names.

“You will conceive a son and you will name him Jesus.” We, too, like Mary are entrusted with the mission to bring light in the darkness... “Manifest the love of God,” to make known that “God is with us,” and if so, what can we lack? Our imperative must always be to “make Jesus known.”

“How can this be?” is a question that we frequently ask ourselves. *How can this be? What will we do?* (share your response) and the Lord tells us: “For God nothing is impossible” and when we did it, it was because we trusted in God and we gave it our all.

“I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done according to your word.” Mary welcomes the invitation...This “let it be done” is not only acceptance, but is also a trusting openness to the future. Mary is the mother of hope. Mary did not know how she could become a mother, but she trusted completely. Give thanks for the times you were generous in responding.

For personal reflection

Lord, just as Mary knew how to welcome the announcement you sent, allow me to know how to listen to and accept what you are saying to me today, because my desire is that the truth of your Gospel permeates my way of seeing, thinking and acting.

- What is Jesus inviting you through His words in this Gospel?
- Share the ANNOUNCEMENTS that you have felt most strongly that God has been making to you throughout your life.
- Mary's response of LET IT BE DONE...What does this say to you? To what attitude does it invite you? To what does it invite you?

Let us finish with the Prayer for Vocations (Kathleen Hughes, RSCJ)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjjTUG5nGc>

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