

Ow Parish COMMUNITY

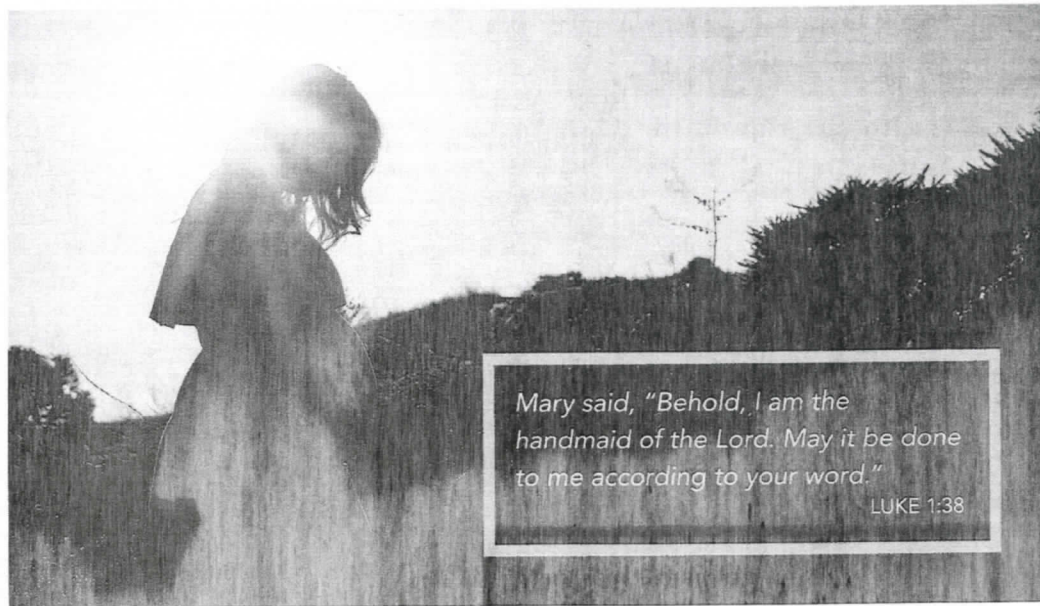
December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent (B)

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Rom 16:25-27

Lk 1:26-38



Mary said, "Behold, I am the
handmaid of the Lord. May it be done
to me according to your word."

LUKE 1:38

How Can This Be?

The reading from Samuel assures us that the leader we are awaiting will be of the royal house of David. We presume this means personal power and political leadership, and recognition of this from others.

The Gospel turns us in a different direction. In it Mary asks, "How can this be?" (Luke 1:34) This question can be understood in two different ways. One means: How is it going to happen? The other suggests: You've got to be kidding! When told she will bear a child, this virgin asks: How is this going to happen? Her visitor

FOR Reflection

- Advent readings show God working in mysterious ways. Where is God working in your life?
- How prepared are you for the deeper meaning of Christmas?

explains the unfolding of an unbelievable event. While stories in pagan religions described how gods took on human form, such wondrous events supposedly happened in royal families—not in the life of an unassuming girl promised to a modest carpenter. In the Incarnation, a singular historic event, Mary did not say: "You've got to be kidding!" She replied: "If that's what you want, I'm willing."

Advent readings have traced God leading the people to salvation and a new way of living, to an outline of an individual chosen by God to lead them, to the realization that this leader will be a descendant of David. However, none of this happens as we might expect. Rather, it unfolds in such an unpretentious way that many people did not even realize it was happening. Who could blame anyone for saying: You've got to be kidding! But God was not kidding. Now we are ready for Christmas.

—Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Dear Padre,

Does God call me, like God called Mary? Can the angel Gabriel speak to me as he did to Mary?

Perhaps God has already spoken to you! In the great calls in Scripture, God doesn't seem to care about age. God doesn't care about gender, race, talents, poverty or wealth, strengths or weaknesses. God calls each of us because we are God's daughters and sons. God's call is personal (to you and no other!), and this call is to always be Christian and serve the Lord. Most often



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the call won't be dramatic, like it was for Moses. More likely, your call will be quiet and personal. Remember what God said: "Be still, and know that I am God!" (Psalm 46:11).

In these hectic days before Christmas, find a peaceful place and quiet time. Be still and say to God, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:9). In this place, God will reveal your call to you, a call that was present long before your birth.

God has already spoken to us in our life's vocation. We are planted in friendships, relationships, marriages, jobs, families, a community, and a nation. In each place, we listen to hear what God is calling forth from us.

Then, like Mary, we say yes! We reach into our most generous spirit and proclaim "yes" to even the most difficult, mundane, or boring aspects of our vocation.

—Fr. Paul J. Coury, CSSR
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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

The angel Gabriel calls Mary "full of grace": in her there is no room for sin, because God chose her from eternity to be the mother of Jesus and preserved her from original sin....We too are asked to listen to God who speaks to us, and to accept his will....The Lord is always speaking to us!

—SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, DECEMBER 8, 2014

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Calendar

Monday

DECEMBER 21
Advent Weekday
Sg 2:8–14 or
Zep 3:14–18a
Lk 1:39–45

Tuesday

DECEMBER 22
Advent Weekday
1 Sm 1:24–28
Lk 1:46–56

Wednesday

DECEMBER 23
Advent Weekday
Mal 3:1–4, 23–24
Lk 1:57–66

Thursday

DECEMBER 24
Advent Weekday
2 Sm 7:1–5,
8b–12, 14a, 16
Lk 1:67–79

Friday

DECEMBER 25
Christmas
Is 52:7–10
Heb 1:1–6
Jn 1:1–18 or
Jn 1:1–5, 9–14

Saturday

DECEMBER 26
St. Stephen, First Martyr
Acts 6:8–10, 7:54–59
Mt 10:17–22

Sunday

DECEMBER 27
*The Holy Family of
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph*
Sir 3:2–6, 12–14 or
Gn 15:1–6; 21:1–3
Col 3:12–21 or 3:12–17
or Heb 11:8, 11–12,
17–19
Lk 2:22–40 or
2:22, 39–40

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