

Annunciation LK 1:26-38

How about just one simple point, on Mary's feast of the Annunciation, provoked by the question that is often on our minds with this morning's Gospel scene, this greatest of scenes, one of the single most important scenes in the history of humanity, Mary's yes. For without it, you and I, as far as we know, would have no hope.

So what makes it possible for Mary to say yes? How is it that she can respond to an angel with this news. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Do to me whatever you want.

The Annunciation is the most popular scene of all religious artistic renditions. Over the years, more artists have depicted this religious scene more than any other. And in almost every depiction of the Annunciation, Mary is always shown on her knees with a Bible in front of her. I think that is striking. I think Mary is able to say yes, Mary is able to surrender because she trusts God, because:

- ✓ she is portrayed a woman of the Old Testament scriptures, for the New Testament had yet to be compiled,
- ✓ she knows God is faithful.
- ✓ she knows nothing is impossible for God.

- ✓ she knows all that God has done throughout salvation history for the people of Israel.

So while she does not know man, Mary does know God. And because she knows God, when Gabriel comes to her and asks for her yes, she says yes because she knows God. Do you? Do I?

How does a person come to know God? Do you know God by birth? No. Do you know God because you were baptized? No. Do you know God because you grew up in a Catholic family? Not necessarily. There is only one way to know God; only one and it is this. You and I have to make a decision to follow Him. A disciple of Jesus follows Him. But how can you or I possibly make a decision to follow someone if we don't know them? And how can I get to know anybody unless I spend time with them? We can't. And if we don't spend time with Him, we do NOT know with conviction that:

- ✓ He is faithful,
- ✓ that He is Good,
- ✓ that He is merciful,
- ✓ that He hasn't promised me that life will be easy.

We don't know with every fiber of our being that nothing, absolutely nothing is impossible for Him.

One thing we have during this pandemic is time. Time to imitate Our Lady in the art of pondering, of looking, of reflecting, prompted by today's gospel, one of the Church's most favorite bedtime story. Her children just keep asking over and over again, "Tell me about the day when Mary said yes, when we got hope, when humanity's history was changed forever!"

Mary, you were there that day. Help me to know your Son. Teach me that God is faithful. Pray for me that I will have the courage to say yes, which of course can only come to the degree to which I know Him, so help me to know Him, as you did, so as to say yes, as you did, and to trust, as you did!

We are told in the scriptures by your Son that the gates of hell will not prevail. Help us to trust that, neither will this pandemic. All will be well.