



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

LUKE 1:38

HOWARD FANBERG PHOTO

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

OUR LADY OF PEACE PARISH

CHRISTMAS MASS FOR OLP

DEC 24 3:00PM & 5:00PM & DEC 25 11:00AM

Welcome to our parish family the newly baptized
Magdalena Littlefield, the daughter of Michael and Amanda Littlefield.
Oliviene Bussian, the daughter of Daniel and Erin Bussian.

Mon	12/21		No Mass
Tue	12/22	OLP	9:00am + Margaret & Rey Fugelstad
Wed.	12/23	OLP	9:00am + Mark Lipsiea
Thur	12/24	OLP	3:00:pm For our parish priests 5:00pm For the people
Fri	12/25	St. Agnes OLP	9:00am +Lois Frost 11:00am Living & Deceased benefactors
Sat	12/26	OLP	5:00pm +Tim Callahan
Sun	12/27	OLP	8:30 For the people
St. Agnes 10:30AM +Mark Lipsiea			

<u>OLP STEWARDSHIP</u>	
Adult envelopes	\$3530.00
Plate	\$85.00
Votive	\$20.90
Immaculate	
Conception	\$80.00
<u>Retirement fund</u>	<u>\$175.00</u>
Total	\$3890.90

Valley Senior Services would like to sincerely “Thank You” for volunteering to help deliver Meals on Wheels to the seniors in Mayville and Portland this year. Your generosity of time is very much appreciated by us and our seniors in the community.
 Shirley Rux—Valley Senior Services

Reminder:
 Blood Drive
 Mon. Dec 21 OLP

OLP prayer chain information
 Julie Lipsiea 786-2138 or Julie.lipsiea@may-portcog.com;
 Marge Spies 788-8775 or maggiejj@yahoo.com or
 Dee VonRuden 788-3334

ST. AGNES PARISH

CHRISTMAS MASS FOR ST. AGNES DEC 25, 2020 9:00am

St. Agnes Stewardship 12/13	
<u>Adult envelope</u>	<u>\$850.00</u>
Total	\$850.00

If anyone has something to share that should be included in the bulletin, please contact Lois, 874-2144, 701-238-4380, lois_ewertz@hotmail.com

From the night of Bethlehem until today,
the Birth of the Lord continues to inspire hymns of joy
which express the tenderness of God,

How many expressive songs has Christmas inspired
in every people and culture!

Who has not known the emotions they express?

Their melodies bring alive once more

the mystery of the Holy Night;

they tell of the encounter between the Gospel and the paths of mankind.

(Yet) How can we fail to notice the strident contrast

between the serenity of the Christmas carols

and the many problems of the present hour?

We know the disturbing developments ,

sweeping from one hemisphere to the other of the globe:

tragic situations, which often

involve human guilt and even malice,

soaked in fratricidal hate and senseless violence.

May the light coming from Bethlehem

save us from the danger of becoming resigned

to so tormented and distressing a scenario.

May Christmas help to strengthen and renew, throughout the world,

the consensus concerning the need for urgent and adequate measures

to halt the production and sale of arms,

to defend human life, to end the death penalty,

to free children and adolescents from all forms of exploitation,

to restrain the bloodied hand

of those responsible for genocide and crimes of war,

to give environmental issues the indispensable attention which they deserve

for the protection of creation and of human dignity!

May the joy of Christmas, which sings of the birth of the Saviour,

instill in all trust in the power of truth

and of patient perseverance in doing good.

For each of us the divine message of Bethlehem resounds:

“Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy,

to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord” (Lk 2:10-11).

Urbi et Orbi message of St. John Paul II, Christmas 1998.

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



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
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



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

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