



Advent Midweek Service

Opening Response

To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, **be glory forever and ever.**

Opening Prayer

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. May we, with Mary, sing your praises and magnify your name. As we worship, renew our vision that we may do your will. In your name we pray, **Amen.**

Reading

Luke 1:26-55

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him 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 ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" 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 holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Reflection Questions

What word, image, or phrase stands out for you in this reading?
Where might you leave fear behind in your life today?
What has God made possible in your life?
How will you magnify the Lord today?

Reflection for the Day

The Impossible

"How can this be" we often ask ourselves. The angel reminds Mary that with God everything is possible. St. Augustine was quoted as saying: God does not ask of us the impossible. God may ask us to do a difficult thing, but God will make it possible.

Mary's life will become a life that recognizes the impossibility of God. Being the mother of our Lord was going to be difficult. But God assured her it was not going to be impossible. Mary put her faith and trust in God as she accepted her mission. We live in difficult and fragile times. We have a pandemic here and wars there and all sorts of things everywhere. Trying to believe and live out the Good News is not only difficult, but seemingly impossible. Believing that there can be peace, that there can be joy, that there can be love, can be difficult. But let this celebration of what we call the Annunciation, the celebration of the Good News of our salvation, remind us that difficulty is not synonymous with impossibility. We join Mary to say "Yes" to God because we want to believe that God is greater than any difficulty and impossibility.

Hymn of the Day

Here I Am, Lord – Dan Schutte

Responsive Prayer

Show us your mercy, O Lord, **and grant us your salvation.** (silence)
Clothe your ministers with righteousness. **Let your people sing with joy.** (silence)
Give peace, O Lord, in all the world; **for only in you can we live in safety.** (silence)
Lord, keep this nation under your care, **and guide us in the way of justice and truth.** (silence)
Let your way be known upon earth; **your saving health among all nations.** (silence)
Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten, **nor the hope of the poor be taken away.** (silence)
Create in us clean hearts, O God, **and sustain us with your Holy Spirit.** (silence)

Closing Prayer

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

Even as we wait, watch, and wonder, **God is with us.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**