

INTRODUCTION

As we journey in this Advent season, we continue preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus liturgically on Christmas. Also, we are preparing for the final coming of Christ at the end of time and His coming in so many ways into our lives.

We then continue meditating during this week on the Annunciation, particularly in Lk.1:32-35, with what Mary posed as a question to the angel, *"How can this be?"*(v.34) This question of Mary is powerful. It shows her interest to make it happen.

This is in contrast with Zechariah. Parallel to the announcement that happened with Mary is that of Zechariah. (cf. Lk.1:18) Mary's faith is exemplary. We can see the big difference with that of Zechariah, the result of which is his becoming mute.

Before this great plan of God, what is asked of us is to believe, to have this living faith in God who called us. Inasmuch as we believe, we can have that same disposition of Mary, who can even set aside one's personal plan for the plan of God which is far better than our own. We are called to live a life of faith like Mary, who simply believed with what the angel told her, "With God, nothing is impossible."

What we are invited is to believe in the Good News that is being announced also to us today. How do I believe?

Faith is what will lead us to constantly seek for the ways how this plan of God can be realized and fulfilled. Faith is what will make us to collaborate with Him in his project.

Like Mary, may God finds in us the disposition needed for his plan to be realized – that we may welcome and carry Jesus in our life. This plan includes us. He makes us to participate. Let us turn to Him constantly in prayer and be sincere with Him amidst our fears and doubts. The Holy Spirit also assures us as He prepared Mary by his grace.

Monday

"He will be called the Son of God."

This is a way of stressing the intimate bond between Jesus and the Father, of sharing in the Father's divine life. Jesus, in becoming one of among us, is to teach us how to live our identity. It is by his incarnation that He united himself with every person, restoring the divine likeness that has been disfigured from the first sin onward. (cf. *Gaudium et Spes* 22) We are God's children, and in fact, we are. Though it is not clear what we shall become, but we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he really is.

(cf. 1 Jn 3:2). Let us assume our identity as children of God in living a life like Jesus; becoming like Him, the first among many brothers/sisters. (Cf. Rom 8:29)

Tuesday

"God will make him a king."

This title refers more to his role as someone who serve and not to be served as the world would take kingship. (cf. Mt.20:28). What is inherent in his being a king is service. For us, Christians, to reign is to serve him. We are being reminded that the child we are to conceive and bear is the child of God. It is just nobody's child. This is the identity that he wants that we may live and carry. As God's children, we are being empowered by the grace of God in order to overcome any obstacle that stops us living out our identity and his plan in us.

Wednesday

"His kingdom will never end."

The longing we can have of a kingdom that will never end already expresses the longing for God as it was during the time of Mary. This is in a way expressing hope in salvation. In a way, this has affected and contributed to Mary's response to God's plan, in seeing the great transcendence of her yes. What a transcendence He has been looking at our lives – for a Kingdom that will not end. Where our Yes can reach?

It is for generations. Like Mary, may we see the transcendence of our faithful following, of our being apostles of Christ.

Thursday

"How, then, can this be?"

This question of Mary shows an active attitude, not passivity. It pleases God to see us with the disposition and readiness in doing His will. Are we disposed in doing His will?

Mary has this complete adherence to the will of God. She cooperated by her obedient faith. May He not find us "sleeping" in our faith as the rest do, but to stay alert and sober. (cf. 1 Thes.5:6-9) Let us ask ourselves and God as well what is the best way to do his will. He wants to bring us to a deeper faith and trust in Him.

Friday

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you."

Before the many questions we can have in front of what God is proposing to us in prayer, we can rely on the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the main protagonist in this plan of God. Let us believe in Him and allow Him to work through us as He worked with Mary. The Holy Spirit is our guarantee to receive what He has promised. He will surely come as we invoke him to help us in our weakness. (Cf. Rom 8:26).

Saturday

"God's power will rest upon you."

The Spirit is our guarantee to receive what He has promised. (cf. 2 Thes.2:13) It is his desire to bring each one into God's presence as a mature individual in union with Jesus. To get this done is to toil and struggle with the mighty strength which He supplies and which is at work in us. (Cf. Col.129)

How do we believe in the power of God, of His word over our life and that of others?

We can rely on God's power. What God is calling us is beyond our control. It is His plan. Thus, he is the one as well to work as we allow Him to take control of everything. Everything will be done through his grace and not by our own. (cf. Phil.413). By this power of the Spirit, God's children can bear much fruit. (CCC 736)

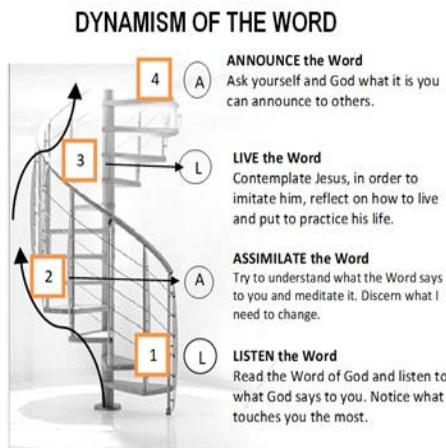
2nd Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2a,10-11

Psalm: Lk 1:46-50,53-54

2nd Reading: 1 Thes 5:16-24

Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28



HOW TO USE THE

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

It is to follow for each day in your prayer through the dynamism of the Word. These are mere guidelines that don't substitute your personal prayer. This is a companion to lead us to be strengthened in our faith and dialogue with the Lord, yet it is our task to give time and silence to our daily meditation. To read the guidelines sheet does not mean that you have prayed.

- Every month we focus on a certain TOPIC, accompanied by a general objective
- Every week has a THEME to pray about based on our faith. To find out if our prayer has been fruitful along the week, you can examine the impact and the assimilation of the theme in your life.
- Each theme is accompanied by a SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE which

summarize the spiritual fruit we intend to ask for the Holy Spirit in our lives during the week.

- The guidelines have an INTRODUCTION that will give us the approach to the readings of the Word of God along the week. It is important to accompany the personal reading of the Introduction with the particular passage of each day. The Introduction will give us a better understanding of the Theme of the week.
- Daily, it has a short COMMENT/REFLECTION which gives us the specific approach to the passage given.
- To advance in our spiritual life and the understanding of our faith, it is important to follow the flow of the week "6 days". This will help us attain the spiritual fruit that can move us to put into practice what we pray, and later on sharing it to others not only with words but with our witnessing.

Pray to the Holy Spirit to give you strength and perseverance. May you enjoy His loving presence through His word in every moment.

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

DECEMBER 11-17, 2017

*"How, then,
can this be?"*

(Lk 1: 34)

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

To discover that living our mission God makes us part of his maternity and paternity; children that are coming from the communion with God and they will be the new apostles who open the way to the Lord.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

To recognize that for God nothing is impossible, and for those who have faith in Him.

