



Advent Reflection

Day #10

Tuesday, December 8 – Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1: 26-38

Have I been hearing the voice of God asking me to help Him fulfill His will? My children keep asking me to help them with their homework and school projects. They keep asking me to play and spend time with them. My girlfriend keeps hoping for me to propose to her. My husband keeps hoping that I still love him and want to be with him. My parents keep asking me for help with projects around their house. They also ask me to visit and spend time with them. My boss asks me to join a team focused on improving employee morale and recognition while I try to manage my already full workload. I read Father's emails week after week. The cathedral needs volunteers to help greet, check-in, sanitize, seat and guide the Faithful attending Mass. Volunteers are to serve guests at Catholic Charities. Parish Leadership Commissions need volunteers to join for a 3-year term. Everyone needs to support the Parish, financially, and its ministries to all of God's people.

Have I said "Yes", or have I said, "No, I don't have time right now. I want to sleep in. I want to binge watch the newest popular show streaming online. I want to go shopping, or I want to go to a party. Maybe tomorrow!" However, tomorrow arrives and something else comes up, so I again say "No". I try to come up with other excuses. It is too difficult. It is too late. I am not comfortable. I am not the right person. I do not want to commit. Maybe weeks or months go by and I am still busy. I still have excuses. However, God keeps asking. He comes looking for us. He does not give up. He does not go away. Moreover, He does not accept a "Yes" for only one of His requests.

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How do I feel when I say “No”? Do I feel regret? Do I try to avoid my children, my girlfriend or boyfriend, my spouse, my parents, my boss, Father after Mass? Do I look for excuses? Am I indifferent?

How do I feel when I say “Yes” to help others, spending time with them, making a commitment to them? Do I feel happy? Do I feel a sense of accomplishment? Do I feel needed? Do I somehow find the energy to continue to say “Yes” even though I am tired? Do I realize that God is pleased with me, much the same way we are pleased with our children and their accomplishments? How our parents are proud of our accomplishments and us?

[Our first parents, Adam and Eve, did not put their total trust in God. They said “No” to God. They listened to someone else. They wanted to be in control. As a result, God closes the gates of Paradise.

As St. Paul keeps reminding us, God Himself chose us to be His own. He has blessed us with the means to do His will. All we have to do is say yes and salvation is ours. Mary’s “Yes” is proof enough that God works great things through us, reopening the gates of Paradise for us through her Son. The road will not be easy or without pain. However, with faith in God, we will get there.]

So let us now go and start to answer the invitations that God has already sent us. Let us listen for the next invitation God has for us. We know how we should answer Him: with faith, without delay, so that without shame or uneasiness, we can proudly visit His Son in Bethlehem.

Reflection by Holy Name Cathedral Parishioner Darren Milanowicz