

The Annunciation
Seventh Day of the Novena
May 17, 2020

Today let us go back in time to when the Angel Gabriel came to Mary to ask her if she would be the mother of Jesus. Mary said “Yes,” “Fiat.” She said “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Mary agreed to accept the Will of God. I spent two years in our Novitiate. It was there where we were told to “do God’s Will, to accept God’s Will.” That meant that we should always accept what happens to us in our life and not “second guess” God or get upset with God when something “bad” happens to us, something that we find difficult. They tell the story of a little girl preparing to go to bed one evening. It was a terrible stormy night, with thunder and lightning. The lights in the house began to flicker. Obviously, she was quite afraid, so she knelt down by her bed and prayed: “Dear God, please don’t let it thunder and lightning any more, please don’t let the lights go out.” But after a brief pause she continued; “But I just thought it over, God, and, you know what? You can do whatever you want!” Amen!” That is what I learned in the Novitiate: to let God do whatever He wants without complaining and getting upset.

Some years ago on December 8th, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, I had celebrated Mass at Villa Victoria Academy. The gospel was the story of Mary’s saying “Yes, Fiat” to God. Immediately after that Mass, I kept an appointment with my doctor. Something had shown up on my annual blood test that indicated that I might have cancer. Now he was going to take a biopsy. He did. And as I left his office I realized that by the end of the next day I might learn that the results of the biopsy might be “positive,” as they say, and indicate that I did, in fact, have a malignant cancer. I remembered the gospel that I had proclaimed that morning, and so I realized that that moment was a very valuable moment in my life, because it asked me to say “yes” to God as never before. It asked me to say, “Lord, my whole life is in your hands. Yes. Yes. If I have cancer, so be it! I know that you love me. I trust in your love. I know you will take care of me!” Each one of us must say “yes” to God as did Mary. At times it is hard to do this. We must be able to say “yes” to God no matter what happens in our life. If we are told we have serious illness, if a loved one is hurt in a tragic accident, if a loved one dies, we must still be able to say “Yes” to God, “Yes, Lord, be it done to me according to your Will!”

I think that we are all asked to say “Yes” to God during this pandemic. I think we must be able to accept what is happening in our world today. We must not get upset at God. We must be able to pray that God’s Will be done, even if we don’t know why or how.

Mary was able to say “yes” to God because she trusted in Him. To truly place our trust in God, we have to believe that He knows what He is doing. Perhaps my dear mother put it best. Whenever something happened, good or bad (especially bad) she would say, “God has a reason for this.”

For example, we had planned a two-day trip to the Pennsylvania Dutch country but my Mom got sick and was admitted to the hospital. When I visited her there, the first thing she said was, “God must have a reason for this.” My Mom’s sister died a sudden death coming out of a Supermarket. She said to me, “God must have a reason for this. God has a reason for everything.”

I really do believe that God has a reason for everything. He knows what he is doing. Everything will turn out well “in the end,” even if “in the end” means when we die and enter the Kingdom of Heaven. And I have to be honest with you. When I die and come face to face to God, I will ask Him why we had to go through this pandemic. Until then, I will continue to repeat what Mary said, “Fiat” ... “Thy Will be done.”

O MARY CONCEIVED WITHOUT SIN, PRAY FOR US WHO HAVE RECOURSE TO THEE.”