

## 4<sup>th</sup> Advent-B Luke 1:26-38

Who is the most famous teenager in the world today? Kylie Jenner? Malia Obama? Shawn Mendes? Why are they famous? They are young, cute, popular and they know how to make lots of money from their talents, little lip sings, uprisings sensations and gossips. These are the celebrities who fit into the category of “I wanna be her!” They are pretty. They are successful. They are famous. We all agree, who wouldn’t want to be like them? There is something common about these famous people; they become famous overnight and their popularity diminishes overnight. Names come and go so quickly it can make your head spin. A person who is cool and popular today may be forgotten tomorrow.

But today I want to tell you about a teenage girl who will never be forgotten. Her name is Mary! The name Mary, having a Hebrew origin, means "The Beautiful." Indeed, she is as a beautiful blooming flower of the Lord God because the Lord gave endless favors upon her. We have so many wonderful saints in the Catholic Church. And Mary is the most famous of all these names? She is known by many titles, including the **Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven, Theotokos** (Mother of God) and **Our Lady** (*Notre-Dame* in French; *Madonna* in Italian). Because of her role she is a favorite subject in art, music and literature. The Angel came to Mary and said Luke “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” 42-43 Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit,<sup>s</sup> cried out in a loud voice and said, “Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 48 behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. Luke 11/27 While he was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.”

As we read just the first part of her story we discover that

- Mary was a Teen Believer. She would have just a teenager. Mary is not alone in this group.

Many of the heroes of the faith in the Bible had a strong faith in God at an early age.

Think of Samuel. God called him when he was but a young boy and he responded with

childlike faith· David. As a teenager he attributed his success over a lion and a bear to the Lord. He defeated Goliath because rather than fixing his eyes on the giant he saw the greater reality of the presence of the Lord of the Armies of heaven and Israel.

· Daniel was perhaps only 16 when he and his companions were taken into captivity. Yet, despite their youth, they had such a deep faith in the Lord they were willing to face death rather than worship false gods.

Faith is not age-dependent! You don't have to wait until you are old to become a hero of the faith. In fact, age will not guarantee anything at all. Many young people are more mature spiritually than people decades older than them. The book of Ecclesiastes urges us to start following God when we are young (12:1) In the Catholic Church also, we have so many canonized teenage saints; saints like Maria Goretti, Dominique savior St. Agnes of Rome. They were dedicated, they were holy, and they were humble for God to work miracle in them that they would become an example for people to imitate.

Today we have the story of how the incarnation took place in history. To come to this world He proposes His initiative; He did not impose it upon Mary and Joseph: It is as though God asked them for "permission". To Mary He proposed —never imposed anything! — to Joseph, God proposed never imposed. What would have happened, if Mary and Joseph said no to the proposal of God? The story of our salvation would have been different. I always ask the same question to myself. What would have happened, if I said no to God's proposal when he called me? Today I would not be standing in front of you celebrating this mass. God only proposed- never imposed. God has a unique plan for each of us. He is not only asking us for permission, He also wants us to take part in His plans, to make a *heroic* contribution as Mary and Joseph did. If Mary had said "No," instead of "Yes," history might have been different – although we know that God's plans would not have been frustrated. Mary's "Yes," changed the world. Her obedience to God's call changed the lives of all of us. How many times have we said "No," to God? How different would things be – for us and for others – if we had said "Yes," to him more often?

God used Mary and Joseph in a unique way to bring salvation to people. Like Mary, and Joseph, God wants to use each and every one of us. Every single day He is proposing a plan. He is not imposing. Are you listening and saying yes to His proposal that God can use you to bring great miracles to this world?

King David was a very devoted king to the Lord and he wanted to build a temple for God so the Lord could have a house on earth in which to dwell (2 Sm 7:2ff). God told King David that He never asked for a house on earth (2 Sm 7:7), and besides, no house or temple on earth could contain Him anyway (see 1 Kgs 8:27). In fact, according to St. John the evangelist, the earth isn't big enough to hold even the books which would have to be written about the Lord (Jn 21:25), so how much less could the world, or any temple, contain the Lord Himself (2 Chr 2:5). The very universe itself isn't vast enough to contain the Lord (2 Chr 6:18).

How can it be (see Lk 1:34) then that the womb of a young teenage girl is big enough to contain the "Son of God"? (Lk 1:35) After centuries of waiting, God finally found a suitable dwelling place for Himself in the temple of Mary's womb, "for nothing is impossible with God" (Lk 1:37).

Are you usable? Are you willing for the Holy Spirit to FLOW into your BODY?

Are you WILLING for the Holy Spirit to INVADE your innermost parts of your BODY?

Are you WILLING for the Holy Spirit to LIVE in you?

Are you willing to FEEL the LABOR PAINS of DELIVERY?

Are you willing to GIVE BIRTH to a MIRACLE today?

