

## **Fourth Sunday of Advent December 18, 2011**

**Call to prayer:** God of wisdom, teach us, through the example of Mary, that we are called to be open to you, who works marvels with a simple “yes.” Give us the courage to say our yes to your daily call to be disciples and stewards of your gifts. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

### **A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke 1:26-38**

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said, “Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.”

But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. “Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?”

And the angel said to her in reply, “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 called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.”

Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The gospel of our Lord

**Focus:** Mary says yes to the angel Gabriel, not knowing what this will mean in her life. The stewardship Mary displays here shows that God is first in her life. Her life is radically altered and so is all of history.

### **Questions for reflection and sharing:**

1. Has your life ever been totally altered with a simple “yes?”
2. Elizabeth realized that nothing is impossible with God. When have you experienced how God works in your life?
3. How can we live this gospel in our daily lives?

**Concluding prayer:** All loving God, make me open to God in my life as Mary was. Help me surrender my need for control and be open to the God who calls me. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.