

A Reflection from Fr. Joseph,

Our lives would be incomplete without a role or a profession that helps us define who we are. We see ourselves as a spouse or an architect, a father or a nurse, a church minister, or a landscaper. And from the perspective of faith, none of these roles are accidental. We believe that the God who directs our lives has led us to our positions in life. To say it in another way, God calls us to be a mother, a lawyer, or an agent for social change. Now the bible knows this action of God very well and presents us scenes in which individuals are called by God to do what God wishes. One of the most famous of these scenes is today's gospel, where Mary is called to be the mother of Jesus. But this passage is so rich that it not only tells us about Mary's call, but it also gives us insights into our call. It tells us that in our calling, most of us will experience doubt and all of us will discover an invitation to something more.



When the angel Gabriel calls Mary, Mary does not accept at once. She first has a question, a doubt, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man." The angel reassures Mary, and she accepts. But not without question. This passage tells us that even when we are called by God, even when we know we are called by God, there will still be days on which we doubt, times at which we question: "Should I really have married this person?" "Is this job really worth the effort I am putting into it?" Such questioning might lead to a change, or it might lead to recommitment. But wherever it leads, God wants it to be clear that doubting is a part of the call, not a rejection of it. If Mary could question her call delivered by an angel, so can we.

The second truth that flows from Mary's call tells us that our call is an invitation to something more. When Mary was called, the angel told her about her elderly cousin, Elizabeth, who was with child. That information was an invitation for Mary to act. God did not expect Mary to stay comfortably in Nazareth, content that she was called to be the mother of the Savior. God invited Mary to go out, to do something more, to help her cousin. The same is true for us. If we earn our living as a business owner, God can call us to something more. Perhaps God will call us to be one who listens to an employee who is struggling or who has experienced a personal loss. Even as we relish our roles as grandparents, the love we feel for our grandchildren can be an invitation to something more, an invitation to become aware of so many children in our world who do not have families or who are held back because of race or a lack of influence. If we have just worked our way through a painful divorce, God can still be calling us to more, a new relationship or perhaps a ministry working with others whose marriages have come to an end.

When Mary said yes to the angel, she accepted her call. But she also showed us that doubt can be a part of the yes and once we have accepted our call from God, we are not finished. God is more than likely to ask of us something more.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. Dec. 25th - CHRISTMAS - The Nativity of the Lord

Mass at Dawn: Is. 62:11-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20

Mass during the Day Is 52:7-10; Heb.1:1-6; John 1:1-18

Tue. Dec. 26th - ST. STEPHEN, feast

Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Mat. 10:17-22

Wed. Dec. 27th - ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE, feast

1 John 1:1-4; John 20:2-8

Thurs. Dec. 28th - FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

1 JOHN 1:5-2:2; Mat. 2:13-18

Fri. Dec. 29th - 1 John 2:3-11; Luke 2:22-35

Sat. Dec. 30th - 1 John 2:12-17; Luke 2:36-40

Sun. Dec. 31st - FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Colo. 3:12-21; Luke 2:22-40

**CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S SCHEDULE**

Dec. 24th - Children's Christmas Mass at 6 pm

Midnight Mass at 11 pm

**Dec. 25th - Christmas Day Masses at
9 & 11 am and 5 pm.**

Dec. 31st - Masses at 9 & 11 am & 5 pm

Holy Hour at 10:00 pm

Mass at 11 pm

**Jan. 1st - New Year's Day Masses at
9 & 11 am only.**

**ALTAR SERVERS**

AS PER CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S SCHEDULE.

PROJECT ADVANCE NEWS

Thank you to all those who have supported our Project Advance campaign, this year. Please be reminded that the deadline to fulfill your pledges is December 31st

PARISH ENVELOPES FOR 2024

Please pick up your new set of parish envelopes from the tables at the entrance of the church. They are arranged in alphabetical order. Those who have recently requested envelopes will also find them there. Anyone wishing envelopes for 2024, who are not currently using them or giving online, is asked to call the parish office. **Please Do Not use them until January 2024.**



CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,



I wish you all, a holy and blessed Christmas.

During the Advent Season, it has been my prayer that we would find moments to reflect on our own faith and relationship with our Lord, Jesus Christ. My dear friends, let us put it this way, our ultimate desire is Jesus Himself. For this reason, we are filled with joy and consolation at Christmas, knowing that all that we hoped for has been fulfilled in the person of the Christ Child.

In the midst of all our current challenges and concerns, the love of God, the Father, is manifested to us in the wonderful gift of His Son, Jesus. With the angels in Bethlehem, our faith moves us to sing: **“Glory to God in the highest and peace to His people on earth!”** Let us recognize that true peace on earth flows from our recognition and praise of God in our lives.

Christmas has a way of bringing to Church individuals and families who, for various reasons, have not been to Mass or received the Sacraments for months or years. What a wonderful and grace-filled opportunity to put aside past differences and old habits and begin anew that prayerful relationship with the Lord and His Church community. With that in mind, I extend to all of you an open, grateful heart of welcome. Together, may we grow in strength and grace by celebrating together God’s presence in our lives.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, bless you, your families and loved ones at this blessed time of hope and grace. May Mary, the Mother of the Child Jesus and our Mother, watch over you and may our patron saint, St. Jude, protect you.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rev. Salvador Reyes Jr. (Fr. Jun)

NIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NEWS

Annual Charity Appeal: The Knights are once again selling tickets for their annual charity appeal. This year, it’s being done online. To purchase your tickets you will need the QR code which is posted in the vestibule.

NOTRE DAME REGIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL
Is now accepting applications for the 2024/ 25 school year. Our Open House will be on: Jan. 18th at 5:30 pm
The Placement Exam will be held on January 24 & 25. For more info or to register call: 604-255-5454.

SCHOOL NEWS

- **Christmas Holidays:** Our school is now closed. We wish all our staff and students a safe and enjoyable Christmas holiday. A special thank you to our principal and teachers for their dedication and hard work. Our school will re-open on Tuesday, Jan. 2nd.

- **ST. JUDE SCHOOL ACCEPTING NEW APPLICATIONS FOR 2024-25**

Please contact the school office for an application form.

ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

Up-Coming Events

Stewardship Reflection

“Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” - Luke 1:28

After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. Her entire life was lived in obedience to God’s call. Mary teaches us to live with joy for all we have been given. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, Mary reflects the light of Christ. Like Mary, we are called to reflect Christ’s light to the world through our gratitude and generosity.

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Remember the Elderly this Christmas

Pope Francis reminds us that our obligation to visit the elderly is more significant than ever as the number of elderly people grows. This Christmas consider visiting the seniors in our community who may be feeling lonely or isolated during this season. “Social isolation and loneliness are as bad for your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day,” Jacques Lee, a Toronto-based emergency physician, told Global News. To learn more about ways you can support the elderly in our community, please visit chabc.rcav.org/seniorsatchristmas

FIAT Snowshoe

Come spend quality time with the Religious Sisters of the Archdiocese and have fun outdoors on Saturday, Jan 6! We will meet at St. Anthony's Parish in West Van. for Mass at 9 a.m., then drive to Cypress for the snowshoe up Black Mountain. All women aged 18-35 are welcome! There is no cost. Please pack a bagged lunch and bring your snowshoes. If you need help getting snowshoes or a ride, contact Sr. Mary Martha at: smmhetzler@rcav.org. Registration deadline is Wednesday, Jan. 3rd.

Please note our office is now closed for the holidays.

We take this opportunity to wish you and yours a blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2024 filled with peace and joy.



Weekend Getaway Marriage Conference

We are excited to partner with [Family Life Canada](#) to offer weekend getaways to married couples in the Archdiocese of Vancouver! The Weekend Getaway is a marriage conference uniquely designed to enrich your relationship. For most couples, it's a chance to reconnect, re-establish the foundation, and rekindle romance. For others, it's a fresh start. For some, it will be the weekend that saves a marriage. The next getaway is on the weekend of Feb. 16-18, 2024 at the Fairmont Empress in Victoria. For info: beholdvancouver.org/events