

Homily – Fr. Jim Farrell
May 4, 2022
May Crowning
28:50 – 34:40

So, in the Gospel story today, an extraordinary thing happens. A young girl is visited by an angel. And the angel is there on behalf of God. The angel starts off by a very simple greeting and then says to Mary, “Do not be afraid,” have no fear.

You know, it’s interesting in the Gospels, various times when God intervenes. Like when Jesus is with his disciples and he’s offering them some advice or instruction, the words **do not fear**, or do not be afraid are present in the dialogue. It’s just a reminder to us that when we unite ourselves with God, when we are one with Jesus, we have nothing to fear because Jesus, truly is our Savior and he will protect us. So we can count on Jesus in every situation. We can count on God when God is asking something special of us. He won't let us down. He will be there to guide us and protect us throughout the journey.

I find this young woman, Mary, to be quite extraordinary. She’s so open to what God is asking of her. She gives her, “yes.” She asks a little clarifying question, “How can this happen,” and then she is open to whatever God is asking of her. Now, this is something that we strive for all of our lives.

All of us are working to be open to what God asks of us, to be able to give to God whatever God asks. That’s a lifetime work, you know? Some days I’m better at it than others. Some days I’m not too cooperative. And that’s usually when I get off-track and give in to some kind of temptation and sin. But when I’m listening to God and responsive to him, I find that God opens up the path forward and there is a peace that comes into my heart.

So when Mary opens her heart to the angel and says, “Be it done to me according to your word,” she gives her “yes.” And you notice, her “yes” is without any kind of conditions or qualifications. There’s nothing half-hearted about her yes. It’s a complete and total yes.

Well that yes changed the world. Because she received Jesus into her life in a very special way, that she became the mother of Jesus, the mother of God’s own Son. And that’s why we still honor her today. And that’s why today we are going to crown her, right here in this church. We’re going to crown her as Queen of Heaven and Earth.

You know this is something that we do each May in celebration of Mary's complete and unqualified yes to God.

Here was a young woman who had her life planned out, she thought. And the angel comes and changes it all. And she cooperates. She doesn't resist. She isn't reluctant. She doesn't dig her heels in and say, "No." No. She opens her heart and says yes. And we continue to work on that – each of us, I think, I hope – we're all working on getting our hearts to be in a place where we can always say yes to God.

So, in a little bit, when we come forward and we crown Mary, it's just our way of saying, We honor you, Mary. - We honor your complete cooperation with God's grace, your willingness to fulfill God's plan. We honor you for all the sacrifices you made for us by accepting Jesus as your Son. We honor you for all the suffering you endured as you watched your Son die on the Cross. We honor you for being a woman of such faith that you trusted that whatever God was doing, that in the end it was going to come out all right – Even though there might have been moments along the journey when you were wondering how, you trusted in the end, all would be well.

So, Mary becomes a model or an example for us. She reminds us that we can, and we really need to open our hearts to God. And when God speaks to our heart, to listen for that first instruction to have no fear and then to listen to whatever God is asking of us. And like Mary give our "yes" so that we can cooperate with God's grace and help to fulfill his plan.