

Written by Bobot Apit

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**I need, like Mary, to focus not on myself, but on the Lord who calls. And that makes all the difference in the world.**

Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10

Psalm 40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11

Hebrews 10:4-10

**Luke 1:26-38** (alternate reading: John 5:17-30) In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, (27) to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. (28) And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" (29) But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. (30) And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. (31) And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. (32) He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, (33) and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." (34) And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" (35) And the angel said to her, "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. (36) And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. (37) For with God nothing will be impossible." (38) And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

\* **Meditation** by Tom Shanahan, S.J. I have always been struck by the simplicity of the Annunciation story. There is so much drama here, but the story is told in such a straight-forward and direct way that the drama takes second seat to the reality of the situation. It is as if the drama draws back so as to highlight the magnificence of the mystery of the Incarnation.

A young girl is visited with astonishing news and she accepts willingly. God's love visits the earth and the process of redemption goes into warp speed with Mary's yes. Mary says yes to the process seemingly convinced that Gabriel's message, the Lord is with you, was really the only thing that mattered. Yes, she was fearful (she was greatly troubled at what was said) and that fear would not simply disappear when the messenger assured: Do not be afraid, Mary. This would be only the beginning for Mary, the young girl, who would be turned into the woman of faith in her relationship with Christ. Mary is, to be sure, our model for acceptance and invitation to faithfully respond to the word of God in our lives. Mary's discerning response to Gabriel's announcement models for us our acceptance of God's invitations in our own unique circumstances.

Am I ready? Am I fit for the task? Do I deserve to be in this position? How will it all work out? These and many similar questions, all of which focus on me, pale in comparison to the recognition and the response to the One who calls me. I need, like Mary, to focus not on myself, but on the Lord who calls. And that makes all the difference in the world. How could Mary, a teenager, respond adequately to the wondrous message she hears as she goes about the daily routines of her life? Gabriel's The Lord is with you is really all that matters. The carrying out of God's call is not due to any strength that Mary possesses of herself (as grand as that may be). As with Mary, my call is to recognition: that God is with me and to trust in that despite what I see as my failings or any hesitations I may have.

Ultimately, the carrying out of an invitation like the Annunciation to Mary depends only on the YES she said in response to Gabriel: I am the handmaid of the lord. May it be done to me according to your word.

The rest is up to God; and that's clearly the most important point of the Annunciation account, and any call/announcement that reaches our ears/hearts.

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## Supplementary Reading

### Creativity's True Source

{xtypo\_quote} I will tell you of new things, of hidden things unknown to you – Isaiah 48:6  
{/xtypo\_quote}

Is there anything new under the sun? Has every original thought already been conceived? The only true original is Almighty God—Creator of all life and all ideas. So, how can you be a creator of something fresh and new? How do you come up with an idea that no one else has thought of? First, spend time looking at what others are doing. Some people are afraid to do research for fear of being influenced and their creativity being adversely diminished as a result of it. But all fresh ideas are just old ideas with a new twist. Once you've spent time looking into existing creations, tap into the ultimate source of creative power, plug into your Creator. The closer you are to him, the more creative and fresh your ideas will be. His supply is endless. Tap into the Creator today.

\* \* \*

Sometimes creativity is simply a matter of perspective. Today, look for new ways of doing "old" things. It will add fun to your day and refresh both you and the people around you.

\* \* \* Note: This excerpt was taken from the "Power for Life Daily Devotional"

## GOD BLESS US ALL!

**PRAY** as if everything depended on **HIM**. **ACT** as if everything depended on **YOU**.

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