

Prepare ye The Way of The Lord



Reading from Luke 1: 30 for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

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.
May it be done to me according to your word.”

Reading from Catholic Social Teaching

“Starting afresh from faith in Christ: there is an ever more acute sense of the need for a radical personal and social renewal capable of ensuring justice, solidarity, honesty and openness. . . we shall be saved by a Person and the assurance that he gives us: I am with you!”

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, #577

“Christian hope lends great energy to a commitment to solidarity and generates confidence in building of a better world. . . Christians are urged to act in such a way that the power of Christ’s Gospel might shine forth in their daily life.

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, #579

Reflection

The possibility of Incarnation, the willingness to be open to such a possibility--these mark the Gospel reading from Luke, and these are gifts offered to us, again, as we approach the celebration of Christ’s birth. We are invited to “start afresh” and be open to the “radical personal and social renewal” as Mary was open to the invitation of the angel. Christ was with her from her “yes,” and Christ is with us, in our commitment to build a better world, in the great work of justice and peace that we are invited to embrace.



Reflection Questions

1. What are the gifts we have been given in the past through our openness to God's invitations to us?
2. What is the invitation we are hearing now, at this time and place?
3. How can we start afresh and taste renewal this Christmas season?
4. God becomes present to us through the Incarnation in a special way. How can we model Christ's compassionate presence in the coming year?



Prayer

We rejoice in your coming,
 O Prince of Peace,
 Lord of Justice.
 Your angels announce
 The wild possibility
 Of your presence.
 Help us to be open,
 As Mary was,
 To the Word.
 Help us celebrate the gift
 Of Your Incarnation
 Through our desire to be reborn
 In the Spirit,
 To be led by a Little Child
 Into new life and new hope
 For a global community of justice
 And a world of peace.