

Second Week of Advent Thursday 8th December 2022

Reading 1, Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Responsorial Psalm, Psalm 97:1, 2-4;

Reading 2, Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11-12; Gospel, Luke 1:26-38



Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patron of the Diocese

We often find ourselves like Mary trying to understand what God has planned for our lives. We can rely on our own understanding becoming greatly troubled. It is only when we let go of our desire to control things and allow God to lead us that we find peace.

God calms Mary's fears as Gabriel tells Her, "Do not be afraid."

I am sure we ourselves have heard those words spoken many times, by different people in our lives perhaps before a big event, a hospital appointment, an exam, interview etc. They are words to comfort, strengthen, and reassure helping us to move past our fears, to free us to respond in a more positive way to whatever situation we are facing.

Like Mary we may have questions and seek the answers through prayer, discussion or the knowledge and experience of others. I think through Mary, God is letting us know it is okay to ask questions about what troubles us.

Mary is then ready to willingly accept God's plan. She has heard of her cousin Elizabeth's pregnancy and has been told by Gabriel of the Miracle of Jesus's conception by the Holy Spirit for Her.

We are told "For there is nothing that God cannot do."

Mary is humble full of trust and ready to serve God. She gives us the example to follow, she has not allowed fear to overcome her. She has trusted God.

We receive this beautiful gift each Advent - let us open our hearts free of fears for the Birth of Jesus in our lives.

"For there is nothing that God cannot do!"

Reflection written by: Gillian Kendall, St. Oswald's, South Shields