

From the Chapel – March 25: She said ‘yes’



[“From the Chapel”](#) is a series of short, daily reflections on life and faith in a time of uncertainty. As people across the world cope with the effects of the coronavirus – including the social isolation necessary to combat its spread – these reflections remind us of the hope that lies at the heart of the Gospel.

At noon Rome time, 7 a.m. here in Huntington, Indiana, Catholics around the world joined Pope Francis in praying the Our Father for an end to the current pandemic. On this solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, those words that we too often recite by rote took on a special meaning: “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Over 2,000 years ago and some 30-plus years before Christ taught his disciples how to pray, a young woman, betrothed but not yet married, heard the voice of an angel. “Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.”

Luke tells us that she was troubled, and who wouldn’t be? But the angel was just getting started. “Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.”

Not surprisingly, Mary wondered how this could be, and the answer that the angel gave her, when you think about it, didn’t exactly clear things up: “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.”

But the answer gave Mary this: She knew now what she was being asked to do, and by whom. And that was enough. “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to

your word.”

Mary didn't know then what her *fiat* would mean. She had no idea that she would live to see her son die, and that sorrow would pierce her heart.

But she said yes.

Today, as we celebrate this great feast in the midst of a Lent that is more austere than usual, we look to the Blessed Virgin's example. We don't know what our future holds – not in the long term, or even in the short term – but we can imitate Mary's faith and say yes to the Lord. “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

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