

Father Ed's Homily

March 25, 2020: The Annunciation

For many people we realize that this is the conception of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know in nine months we will be celebrating Christmas. With what is happening today what a wonderful promise of what is to come. Looking at today's readings, even though we are talking about a conception in a most remarkable way we are also witnessing the sacrament of marriage. Let me explain. I love the sacrament of marriage. Wedding days are great. I know some people may not agree with me but it is a day of love, excitement, anticipation, and joy. And those words all indicate that this is a sacrament of God. Let's think of what led up to this point. A man and woman meet. They feel some sort of attraction as God made us all to be attracted in this way. A conversation develops and we begin to share ideas, we come to know one another. The attraction grows stronger and a love develops that is based on trust, respect, and personal integrity. Then the day comes that the man asks for the hand of woman in marriage. He has thought this through and desires to have this person in his life for the rest of his life. The emotion at the time of the question is exhilarating. Two people promising to be come one. Then the day of the wedding. At the rehearsal the night before we go through the processional. It is always the most difficult thing to get people into church. I then always speak to the bride aside from everyone else. I tell her that when she comes to the back of the church she should stop. And when she is ready to then process into the church. I am not sure what the woman is thinking about as I tell her this. Other people suggest that I am just allowing the photographer time to take more pictures. Or that this is just a moment of vanity, to let people look at how beautiful she is.

The reason is far more important than any of these. The reason is in the Annunciation today. The angel waits for Mary's answer. Will she accept God's request to be the mother of His Son? Mary has known God all her life. She was raised in a Jewish family. She would have known God's Word and His commandments. She would have even known God loved her. The question she faces now is the same question a bride must answer as she stands at the back of the church. That question is this. Can I trust him? I know he loves me. I know he wants the best for me. But can I trust him? Mary pauses to say how can this be. Trust is not an emotion. At some point trust becomes an act of will. For Mary she says let it be done unto me according to your will. The bride says she will trust her soon to be husband by beginning that walk down the aisle. Mary's will was fused into and with God's Will. The bride's will now becomes one with her soon to be husband. With Mary, humanity is wedded to divinity. With the bride, the bride is wedded to her husband. The sacrament of marriage is the giving of self to the other. The Holy Spirit becomes the spouse for Mary. She gives herself to God.

Today we need trust in God more than ever. Every news program is trying to win your trust. They are appealing to your emotions. They want you on their side because it generates revenue. In accord with the example I listed above, that is not trust. It is living together. If I am only appealing to your emotion at some point we burn out. We cannot sustain that type of emotion. Trust is an act of will. The more you trust in God the stronger your faith. The stronger your faith the more you will trust God. Listen to the news for maybe 15 minute a day. You will get what you need. Then turn to God. Prayer and reading the Bible will grant you a peace that you will not get from the other sources trying to win you over.