



## St. Vincent de Paul Parish

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March 25, 2020

Dear Faithful Parishioners,

The Church celebrates today the Solemnity of the Annunciation. When the Angel Gabriel appears to Our Blessed Mother asking her if she is willing to be the Mother of God and give birth to the Savior of the world. In 9 months we will be celebrating the gift of Christmas - the Word made Flesh and dwelling among us. Our Emmanuel - God with us.

In Donald De Marco's book *The Virgin Mary and the Culture of Life*, he speaks of the beautiful gift of Mary's fiat. He reflects, "Mary is whole and blessed in uniting herself with God both bodily and spiritually. The culture of life, therefore, begins with an affirmation, a fiat: "Let there be light", at the commencement of creation; "Let there be love", preceding the Passion in the Garden of Olives; and "Let there be life," in response to the Annunciation. Light, Life and Love also represent the three Persons of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Mary is the link between divine life and human life. She is the beginning of the culture of life."

Another reflection from the book *Behold the Lamb of God* by Kathleen Beckman reminds us like Mary we are called to say yes to God's will at every moment of our life. The reflection is called Complete Surrender:

*Apostle of the Eucharist, surrender is the proper disposition of heart that is fertile ground for grace. The seeds of divine grace cannot take root in an un-surrendered heart. How can God bless you if you are closed? Understand that God requires your cooperation with divine grace. You must love God and trust in His Holy Will as a child trusts in a loving parent. God, your loving Father, can offer special graces tailored to you but you must open yourself to accept His grace; He does not force anything upon anyone. Grace accompanies you always but only to the degree that you surrender can you receive its blessing.*

*God's will is to teach you the way of love and lead you to an eternal life of joy. Nothing can separate you from the love of God, nothing! He comes to rescue the greatest sinners for whom he laid down his life. What, then, prevents you from giving God your continual "fiat"? Have you not heard; do you not know? God is Love! There is no reason to doubt the truth of the Word of God. He makes his abode in you; you have His indwelt Spirit. Surrender - trust - faith is the proper response to love; a love he has poured into you that you may rejoice in His Presence as He rejoices in you. You are the work of His Almighty Hand. Your yes to God opens vistas of grace for you and for those you serve. If you suffer with Him for a while, He will provide the grace and transform your suffering into joy.*

*Surrender with love!*

On this magnificent day of Mary's great Yes, may our souls rejoice in God our Savior!

Please see the attached letter that explains how we will be offering a ["Lenten Retreat at Home"](#) this Saturday. I encourage all parishioners to participate in union with each other. I also ask that you reach out to any parishioner you may know that lives alone or could be isolated at this time. Please call us at the parish office if you know of a parishioner who may be in need of the priests reaching out to them.

Know that you are in our daily prayers, and we truly miss seeing all of you. May God's peace be in your homes.

In Christ,

Fr. Willard and Fr. Taylor