

Greetings!

Today's Gospel reading is the beautiful prayer known as the Magnificat:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, My spirit rejoices in God my Savior."
Mary, chosen by God to be the mother of the Christ Child, rejoices.

Can you imagine the questions she had herself, as well as the questions from her family and neighbors'? The fear and uncertainty of her future did not keep Mary from responding to God's invitation to be open.

I am sure this was not the life Mary thought she would have, yet she was willing to make a tremendous sacrifice for the God she loved and the God she believed loved her enormously. Her own words describe it so well:

"For He has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed. The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is His Name." Mary was a humble and holy servant of the Lord. We, too, are called to holiness.

This beautiful prayer makes me ponder -- how am I responding to God's call for me? Am I serving with joy? Am I allowing God to transform my life?

I hope you will take a few minutes during these last few days of Advent to stop by and view the beautiful new statue of the Mary. It was given in memory of a mother who lived her life with joy and laughter in service to God.

Let us reflect on Mary's sacrifice and love, and as the great St. Ambrose once said, "Let Mary's soul be in us to glorify the Lord; let her spirit be in us that we may rejoice in God our Savior."

This painting of Mary with the words of the Magnificat is by my daughter Emily. It hangs in my office and I am so grateful to have it now, since Emily has joined Mary in Heaven.

May you all have a very, Merry Christmas.