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26 Monday

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Is7: 20-14; 8,10

Psalm 39: 7-8a, 8b-9; 10,11

Hebr 10: 4-10

Lk 1: 26-38

The familiar story of the angel's announcement to Mary ends with her total acceptance of God's will and plan for her. It's the point of the story, and also her greatest glory: to become the Lord's "handmaid", the dedicated servant who works fully with Him. But before that, the gospel tells of Mary's being perplexed, puzzled, disturbed, even frightened (the angel has to tell her not to be afraid). She just couldn't understand how what she was told was God's plan could possibly come about: it seemed to be a nonsense. Not everyone receives such a clear, compelling invitation; but when God does come into peoples lives, His presence is often enough disturbing and perplexing, because His ways and the plans of His heart are not our ways. It can be hard to understand what God is up to, and to discern His will for us isn't always easy. But a first step is to listen attentively, and then not to be afraid of what we hear, or afraid of having to do something new or different. And that itself is a grace given by God. To say "yes" to God is a supreme act of faith, our own choice, but made with His power and grace. May we learn with Mary to live through the things we don't understand, and in peace to answer "Yes" to the Lord's word.

[text word-count: 230]