

To Ponder:

Annunciation

By Kathleen Norris

When I brood on the story of the Annunciation, I like to think about what it means to be “overshadowed” by the Holy Spirit; I wonder if a kind of overshadowing isn’t what every young woman pregnant for the first time might feel, caught up in something so much larger than herself. I think of James Wright’s poem “Trouble,” and the wonder of his pregnant mill-town girl. The butt of jokes, the taunt of gossips, she is amazed to carry such power within herself:

*Sixteen years, and
All that time, she though she was nothing
But skin and bones.*

Told all her life that she is nothing, the girl discovers in herself another, deeper reality; a mystery something holy, with a potential for salvation. The poem has challenged me for years to wonder what such a radically new sense of oneself could entail. Could it be a form of virgin birth?

We all need to be told that God loves us, and the mystery of the Annunciation reveals an aspect of that love. But it also suggests that our response to this love is critical.

When the mystery of God’s love breaks through into my consciousness, do I run from it? Do I ask of it what it cannot answer? Shrugging, do I retreat into facile clichés, the popular but false wisdom of what “we all know?” Or am I virgin enough to respond from my deepest, truest self, and say something new, a “yes” that will change me forever?

Reading:

Luke 1:27-38

The angel Gabriel came to her and said, “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!”

But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be.

And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and his kingdom will have no end.”

And Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no husband?”

And the angel said to her, “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.

And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.”

And Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Sharing...

a word...

a phrase...

a reflection...

Song

The Road that Mary Trod

By Danny O'Flaherty

Beneath the windy indigo of
night
It wandered lone
And curled his crooked fingers
Through that pebbled path and
stone.

Down ravaged wastelands carved
through time
Round bends of sandy hills
The lonely road arched round and
down
Across night's desert chills.

Oh light the burden it did bear
The starry God-filled night
Oh priceless cargo brought to life
By road of obscure light

Upon his path three shadows cast
Of woman, man and mule
That lengthens out two thousand
years
From the first heavenly yule.

The road is here, oh Bethlehem
In hearts of men who will
Allow his cloistered birth again
All hallowed and all still
In every walk of life is found
The road that leads to God
With ancient shadows lingering
round
The road that Mary trod.

Chorus

Oh where, oh where is the road
that Mary trod?
That brittle cold, the desert night
She gave birth to our God.

Thank You For Joining Us!

Your Prayer Leader

Syndie Eardly

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Love invites us to say "Yes" to our lives



Our prayer is characterized by silence
Be still and know that I am God!

In that silence we listen for a new word.
God is present in all our lives.
God cares for us, and
our life experiences are a source
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence
we share from our hearts.