Advent 4 B

# MDP of God

Last Monday the kids in our school did a little Christmas production where they sang about keeping Christ in Christmas—about the baby Jesus—about the shepherds and angels and wise men

 To hear children sing of God’s love

To hear them sing about how God wants to be close to us- really warms my heart

It all filled me with great joy- because this whole season is about Jesus – about His love for us – about His humbling Himself to become one of us

It’s the love of God that fills us with joy during this holy time of the year

As we sing in one of our Advent songs – “Love the Lord is on the way”

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# *And His coming into the world when He did all hinged on Mary’s “yes”-* which we heard about in today’s gospel

And I think sometimes we think of that as if it had to be an automatic thing- as if she had no choice

But Mary, like all of us, *had a choice* to put herself at the disposal of God’s plan ***or to not do that***

Mary said, “I am the maidservant of the Lord, let it be done to me as you say.”

But she could have just as easily said, “No thanks” – “It sounds too scary to me”- “It seems too much to ask” – or “I have other plans for my life”

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And my friends, isn’t that often our response to God?

 “No thanks God, *I have other plans*”[basically what sin is]

 “*God your ways just seems to expect* ***too much*** *from me*”

 “Lord I’d rather do things **my** way”

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After all when Joseph heard that she was pregnant- the first thing he wanted to do was dump her

##  What the angel was telling her was scary stuff

My friends, in this gospel Mary was maybe 13 to 16 - we’re not sure exactly

 And I’m sure that Mary had hopes, and dreams, and plans for how she wanted her life to go

 But the angel Gabriel basically said to her, *Mary, forget your hopes and dreams and plans* - **because God has other plans for you.**

 Mary, as we just heard put her life at the service of God’s plans

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And I think there’s a few things that we can learn from Mary’s doing this

First, we learn that God’s dreams for our lives are far greater than any puny hopes and dreams we might have for ourselves- *You see He loves us so much that He wants to give us far more than anything we could even dream for ourselves*

 *No matter what Mary may have had in mind* - look at what God’s dream was for her

 She was to be the New Eve [Mother of all those...]

She was to be the New Ark of the Covenant-[1st reading] [God bearer]

#  She is loved by millions of people upon the earth

She is enthroned in heaven -[loved by millions of angels and saints*]- she now reigns with her Son—and she will for all eternity*

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Not bad for a kid from some backwater town in an insignificant country

***Although*** *in this life* – things didn’t always look so good for her- which I’ll get to in a second

And my friends, we need to remember that God has a plan for our lives too

And what God has in store for you and me - is **far beyond** any of the hopes and dreams we might have for ourselves

 You see, He wants you and me **to reign** with Him

 He wants you and me to share in His glory

He wants you and me to share **His joy** (not just human joy—Divine joy)

But my friends, Mary’s yes to God, also reminds us that when we’re right with the Lord - faithful to His Will - /// when we’ve embraced His dreams for our lives

 *That doesn’t guarantee that we will have smooth sailing*

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Let’s reflect for just a moment what was included in God’s dream for Mary’s life

 After Joseph found she was pregnant [wanted divorce - pain]

[Nine months pregnant - donkey ride to Bethlehem - where her son was born in a stable and placed in a feeding trough]

 [She had to flee to a foreign land - King Herod **(Vladimir Putin)** wanted to kill her Son]

 [When 12….Three days...]

 [Sometime before Jesus’ public ministry she was widowed]

 [Saw her Son rejected - arrested - Carry His cross - abandoned - nailed to cross - die - held lifeless body - saw Him put in the tomb]

God’s plans for Mary’s life - to the human eye weren’t always pleasant

 *But Mary is certainly a wonderful example of the promise of God* - That He will make all things work out right in the end for those who love Him

 He has done that for Mary - and my friends, we can be confident that He will do the same for you and me

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He wants far more for us than we could ever want for ourselves

 He has greater dreams for us than we could ever dream

#  He has greater plans than we can even imagine

But, if He’s going to give us what He wants us to have - He often has to **withhold** from us *what we want us to have*

 He does so - so that we can learn to trust - we can make great leaps of faith - we can learn to love Him and His will for us

Let’s follow Mary’s example and put our lives at the service of God’s plan