

May 28-29, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

Our third stained-glass window has been in place for about a month now so I thought that this would be a good opportunity to give you a little summary of what it is attempting to portray. First of all, I am thrilled by the placement. Having this Annunciation window around the corner but before the Nativity window is so meaningful. As you look at the Annunciation window you should realize that Mary cannot see what will be the situation of the birth of the child that she will have for her son. God only revealed the Conception but no other details. I think that this is the meaning behind having the roses in the image. You can only see the beauty of the roses but we all know that there are always thorns that come with the roses. As one who knew Scripture, Mary had to know that there would be thorns involved in the beauty of bringing the long awaited Messiah into the world.

The other flowers that are in the window are lilies. You should notice that they are growing out of what looks like a dried out stick. This stick represents the kingdom of David. It was way past its glory but the Lord had promised that from it would come a kingdom that would never die. Those lilies also represent the purity of Mary. So Archangel Gabriel is presenting a symbol of what God is going to do through Mary. He wants to have her bring forth the new extension of the royal family, which is the Church, the Body of Christ. These lilies also represent Mary as the pure bride for the Lord.

Like Mary's gown in the Nativity scene, Mary is portrayed in a royal robe for she is to be the queen mother. The angel's robe has images of pinecones on it. There is a giant bronze image of a pinecone in the main garden of the Vatican Museum in Rome. It represents the potential of new life, but life that will be evergreen.

The Holy Spirit is shining onto Mary. This represents the fact that she is already saved. That happened at her Immaculate Conception, which we celebrate on Dec. 8th. So she was filled with Sanctifying Grace when the Archangel gave her God's message.

So now the stage is set. Everything waits on Mary's answer. This is why I believe that Gabriel has his hand in the air almost like a person who is about to wave a flag to start a race. As we gaze on the image we are caught in that moment right before Mary says: "I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done unto me according to your word." At that point I can just picture Gabriel waving his hand ecstatically to signal that the plan can go forward and the Holy Spirit can overshadow Mary, and Jesus would be conceived within her.

This is why I love these windows. They are like our lives as seen by God. We look at ourselves as simple and sometimes even pathetic. We seldom think of ourselves as glorious. I doubt that Mary thought of herself as glorious at that time either. But by saying yes to God she becomes something so amazing that it is beyond our imagination. The artists who put these windows together did their best to portray the view of these people and events in history in a way that shows a bigger plan for them and us.

With each young man being ordained, or each couple being married, or even each of us receiving one of the sacraments we have another person allowing themselves to be a part of God's plan in the same way. I wonder if there will be stained-glass windows portraying any of you in centuries to come. Even if there aren't I hope we can each live out our lives so we can become a part of God's glorious Kingdom.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank