



THE ANNUNCIATION

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Christmas Day

December 25, 2016

A Weekly Reflection

From Isaiah Chapter 9:

*For unto us a child is born,
unto us a Son is given;
and the government shall be upon His shoulder;
and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

These words of Isaiah are often seen as words that foretell and foreshadow the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, born of Mary. The truth is, these words befit Him because this child changed the world. This child changes lives. This child changes us.

I remember when our oldest daughter was a baby. My wife and I were young. We were footloose and fancy-free. It was just the two of us newlyweds, so if we wanted to go out to eat dinner, we went out to eat dinner. If we decided to go to a movie at the last minute, we just went. We actually felt like we had money back then. And we did have a little bit of discretionary income. We could pretty much do what we wanted to do, within reason, and we didn't have to think too much about the consequences or impact of a spontaneous decision and what we had to do to make that happen.

And then, all of a sudden, this little, innocent human being, a little child, came into our lives, and literally gained control over our entire world. Before we could do anything else we had to think about, "Who's going to keep the baby?" or "Is this a good time for us to go without the baby?" We soon learned that we were not in control of our lives anymore. Even our sleeping patterns became very different. We would stay awake when the baby was awake and we went to sleep when the baby went to sleep. Literally this child began to control our lives and the child didn't even know she was doing it. And then we had a second one she did the exact same thing. And I've since learned that that's what babies do. When they arrive they take over! And their parents begin to develop their lives around this child. To mold their entire lives around this precious needy baby.

Isaiah wrote, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given . . . and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." This child who was born of Mary changes everything. This child born in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes changes how we live. This child born to the sound of angels singing Gloria in excelsis Deo — this child to whom the wise ones came from afar bearing gifts — this child, changed the way the entire world works.

And this Jesus, born into a world torn by strife and hatred and division and pain and poverty, this child is born anew wherever men and women say, "I'll follow Him. I'll follow Him as my Savior. I'll follow Him as my Lord."

When this child grew up, He said His reason for coming, again quoting Isaiah, from the 61st chapter, he said,

The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach Good News to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, the recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty all those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

This child, when He grew up, came to show us the way to live lives of love, lives of compassion, lives of goodness, lives of kindness, lives of justice. This child came to show us how to change the world. So this Christmas, make room for him to change us. This Christmas help us change the world. And make a new commitment, to go out from this day, to let this Christmas Day, be the first day of a new world.

God bless you. God keep you. Have a blessed Christmas. A Happy New Year. And go on out and change the world!

Merry Christmas!

We're glad you are with us on this joyous Sunday celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, Our Savior. We invite you to **join us on future Sundays** at 9 a.m. for Eucharist or at 11 a.m. for Eucharist or Morning Prayer, on **Wednesdays for Noonday Prayer** at 12 p.m. in beautiful and quaint Little St. Mary's, for a **class or Bible study**, or for many of our other fellowship and outreach offerings. **Little St. Mary's** is also **open** Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. and available to you for prayer and reflection. Flip the page over to get a sense of what we have going on around St. Mary's.

Worship bags

We provide worship bags that contain a coloring page based on the Gospel reading of the day. It also has a wonderful parent-focused message on the back to help you talk about the day's reading with your child. Worship bags are located in wood bins near the entrances to the church.

Sermons available

Find past sermons available in hard copy in the narthex of New St. Mary's, or visit stmarysgoochland.org/sermons to hear audio and download print versions.

Connect with us

We would love to learn more about you! If you are a visitor, please pick up a **welcome packet** from one of our ushers.

Would you like to write for us? Contact Ashley Cameron at acameron@stmarysgoochland.org to learn more.

12291 River Road, Richmond, VA 23238 | (804) 784-5678 | www.stmarysgoochland.org

Do you receive email from us?

Visit stmarysgoochland.org/communications to sign up for weekly updates and news from us.

Reflection by: The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church

This Week at St. Mary's

Monday, December 26

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, December 27

Vestry Meeting, 2:30 p.m., Old Parish Hall

Wednesday, December 28

Noonday Prayer - Cancelled

Friday, December 30

Church Office Closed

Coming Up in 2017

Sunday, January 1, The Holy Name

Holy Eucharist Rite Two, 10 a.m., New St. Mary's

Monday, January 2

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, January 3

Fellowship Committee, 9 a.m., Old Parish Hall

Staff Planning, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Rector's Study

Wednesday, January 4

Noonday Prayer, 12 p.m., Little St. Mary's

Children's Choir, 5 p.m., Choir Suite

Thursday, January 5

Adult Choir, 7:30 p.m., Choir Suite

Saturday, January 6

A.A., 10 a.m., Education Building Classroom

Sunday, January 8, First Sunday after the Epiphany:

The Baptism of Our Lord

Holy Eucharist Rite One, 9 a.m., Little St. Mary's

Parish Breakfast, 9:30 a.m., New Parish Hall

Sunday School, Confirmation Class, and Adult

Education, 10 a.m., Sunday School and Education Buildings and New Parish Hall

Holy Eucharist Rite Two, 11 a.m., New St. Mary's

Cookies and Coffee, 12 p.m., Café and New Parish Hall

High School Youth Group

Coming Soon in 2017

Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m. starting Tuesday, January 10

Men's Spiritual Practice, Old Parish Hall

Thursdays at 7 p.m. starting Thursday, January 12

Women's Book Study, Library

Sunday, January 22

Youth Mission Information Session, 10 a.m., Education Building

Sunday, January 29

Annual Meeting, New St. Mary's

CLERGY, STAFF, AND VESTRY

Gersain Agudelo, *Assistant Sexton*

Gina Alexander, *Parish Administrator*

galexander@stmarysgoochland.org

Melissa Alicea, *Nursery Assistant*

Adam Bailey, *Children's Choir Director*

Louise Browner Blanchard, *Rector*

wblanchard@stmarysgoochland.org

Ashley Cameron, *Director of Communications and Parish Life*

acameron@stmarysgoochland.org

Tammy Click, *Accountant*

W. Dwight Graham, *Organist and Choirmaster*

Robert G. Hetherington, *Priest Associate*

Amelia McDaniel, *Director of Children's Ministries*

amcdaniel@stmarysgoochland.org

Paul Pace, *Sexton*

Matt Rawls, *Director of Youth Ministries*

mrawls@stmarysgoochland.org

Lori Smiley, *Assistant to the Clergy*

lsmiley@stmarysgoochland.org

Meg Zehmer, *Nursery Director*

Susan Rawls, *Director of St. Mary's Episcopal School*

Vestry Members:

Al Rider, *Senior Warden*

Jane duFrane, *Junior Warden*

Bill Gooch, *Treasurer*

Charmaine Trice, *Register*

Scott Barton, Steve Guza, Brantley Holmes, Fay Lohr,

Tracey Ragsdale, Betsy Rawles, Bruin Richardson,

David Rose, and Tom Slater

CHRISTMAS DAY

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.