

NOVEMBER 29 2025 DEACON MIKE WALSH

Let me begin with a story about a young girl.

She had just come of marrying age in a culture that valued kinship and family above all else. Her life was unfolding according to plan — a plan much like every young woman of her time. She would be promised in marriage, become a wife, and eventually a mother. By all accounts, she was a good and faithful daughter, living quietly with her parents and considered a model child.

Then, in one unexpected moment, everything changed. She was offered the chance to do something that did not follow the well-worn path her family and tradition had laid out for her. If she said no, her life would move forward as expected. But if she said yes, everything would become uncertain — and even dangerous.

Which path would she choose?

You've likely already guessed that the young woman in the story is Mary, the daughter of Joachim and Anne. While history surrounds her with titles, crowns, and stars, at this moment she is simply a young woman trying to do what is right.

The invitation to a new path comes from an angel. We have countless beautiful images of the Annunciation — Mary in blue robes, the angel Gabriel standing before her, light filling the room as he speaks God's call.

It's easy to imagine that scene as calm and serene, but for Mary it must have been terrifying.

In the great prayer we know as the Magnificat — Mary's song of praise from the Gospel of Luke, prayed each evening in the Liturgy of the Hours — she exclaims:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

And later she adds:

[God] has come to the help of his servant Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Mary's yes teaches us what Jesus calls for in today's Gospel — hearts awake, not weighed down, ready to say yes when God comes.