

## Obedience to Reality

This month the feast of the Annunciation is celebrated. This year it will be celebrated on March 26<sup>th</sup> because the 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a Sunday. It is one of my favorite feasts. The angel Gabriel was sent from God to ask Mary to give birth to the Son of God. Mary's fiat, her "yes" was the yes that changed all of history. This does not mean that Mary's life was peaceful and uneventful after the birth of Jesus. We know that it was not. So how did Mary meet each new day, each new challenge, and each surprise along the way and each new danger to the safety of her child?

I do not think the reality shows such as "Dancing with the Stars", "Survivor Fiji", and "The Amazing Race", and "The Apprentice" will give us an answer. I can only guess by what the commercial says or what a friend might say about the shows that they are far beyond our everyday reality.

Our days are filled with different kinds of challenges, dangers, and surprises. Whether it is the birth of a child, the death of an elder, a grandchild gone astray or difficulties meeting the bills this month, our reality is more down to earth and messy.

Last fall we were told we needed another \$200,000 before we could continue with Phase 3 of the monastery. Not only was my heart sad, the tears were not far behind. A bitter disappointment became a part of our reality. Somehow, I knew that all would be well and peace returned. I reflected on the experience of how the disappointment became a part of my reality.

Without my really trying, I had absorbed wisdom from my mother. Mom lives life with what I have come to call, "obedience to reality." It is a way of living that says no matter what happens God is with me and I have to accept the reality. She never sat around feeling sorry for herself because Dad's new job took her 800 miles from her family, for example. She accepted it as reality. This is what is and so we do what is necessary and in that case it was to pack up everything, move, and begin life in a new place, meeting new people and putting down new roots.

I have a vow of obedience, but Mom lived obedience in a way that has taught me what obedience is all about. Where did she learn this way of obedience to reality? It might come from her lifelong relationship with the Blessed Mother and her daily rosaries. Meditating on the mysteries of the rosary has taught her how Mary met the challenges of her life. It has also taught her to rely on God as Jesus did. It has also taught her to look for the joys in life. They are just as present as the sorrows and are all part of reality.

Therefore, this year when I celebrate the Annunciation, I plan to pray a special blessing on my mother for the lessons she has passed on to me. I will thank God for Mary and for my wise mother.

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