

"Yes, Lord here I am", a New Year's Day Reflection

It is most appropriate to begin the New Year with the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. The first day of New Year reminds us of the beginning of things, the beginning of the world and of mankind. On this first day of 2018, I look forward to the future with hope and expectation for new events, challenges and opportunities. A key point adjustment is for me to start with the determination to find God in all things. As always I am relying to the grace of God. That no matter what happens, may it good or bad, I can enter into the experience where God's hand is at work. Indeed, He brings blessings in pain or in joy or in varied forms to say, as long as the heart sees rightly. That is why I pray that gratitude may always prevail in my life that I may not fail to thank him especially in this Year of the Clergy and Consecrated Persons, as much as I, myself a consecrated person. On this Marian Feast, it is Mary above all others who can teach me what it means to live by faith, learning her attitude: she keeps and ponders everything in her heart (Lk 2, 19). ***For it is the way to keep my "Yes" to God.***



“LET IT
BE DONE
TO ME
ACCORDING
TO THY
WORD.”
LUKE 1:38

I cannot but connect my own vocation to Mary's Fiat. Every time I pray the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" echoes Mary's Fiat: "Be it done unto me according to your word." Personally, each time we commit ourselves to embracing God's call and accepting His will, we mark a new point on the path of our relationship with Him. For the rest of her life, Mary pondered her extraordinary encounter with God, turning the weight of the angel's message over and over again. From the manger to the cross, Mary's life

was radically changed – her relationship with God profoundly deepened – the moment she said “Yes.” And this comes to me as a challenge because each day I desire to be closer to God.

Mary’s faithfulness to God is evident upon the events in her life which I believe the fruit of a deep prayer life. She is always attune with God that makes her sheer obedience possible even if in the midst of uncertainty. Because of Mary’s faithfulness to God, she was able to receive the gift of God’s Son and accept her role in God’s plan for salvation. By doing so, she is now our model to the path of discipleship. She is the Mother of the disciples and the Mother of the Church. She is our mother. Our call to discipleship also includes our prayer and reflection on the events of our lives that we might see God’s presence at work in our lives. And discipleship means obedience to God and His will.

Amidst the noise of everyday life, can we recognize His distinct voice? More than ever, if I recognize God in every situation and every life’s circumstances God is surely at work. This is what I have wanted all my life as a young religious of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. Encounter with God is possible as long as the heart is open to God.

And I pray: “May we may find God in all things.” The same I pray for you that we may all grow in docility as we perceive God’s presence daily and in every minute of our life. And that our hearts may always be the rightful throne of God. Let us always remember that the initiative begins with God and the response is ours. Are we ready to say: **“Yes, Lord here I am”**.

Written by:

Br. Alvin P. Manaois, SSS @ New Year 2018

Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament