

# REFLECTION

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***Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." (Luke 1:26-38)***

**We long to know God's plan for our lives.** We dream of the day when God reveals his plan to us, romanticizing the dramatic call and our brave "yes." These dreams come from our desires to be chosen and wanted. We need to know that we have a purpose, and we're anxious to find out what it is.

Even before the Annunciation, Mary knew that God had a plan for her. In her patience and gentleness, Mary trusted in the Lord's perfect timing. She probably never expected that he would reveal his will through an angel, and she probably never dreamed of being the Mother of God. Regardless, Mary didn't just say yes, she said "let it be done," or in Latin, "fiat." She accepted God's plan for her completely, wholeheartedly, and without reserving anything.

Mary conformed her will with God's will. She wanted what he wanted. When God calls us, this is how we should respond. God gave us the gift of free will so that we can say yes out of love for him. As the most perfect Saint, disciple, and missionary, Mary said yes to God in all things. She always followed his will perfectly, and we can look to her as we say yes to him in big and little ways.

Like Mary, we might be scared or confused when God asks something of us, but we can emulate our Blessed Mother by saying "let it be done."

## SERVICE SUGGESTION

When we get serious about living simply, we should downsize. My service suggestion for you this week is to donate. If you have five hoodies but only need three, then give two away. Instead of getting coffee every morning before work, donate your coffee money to a nonprofit or a charity. When we have more room for God, we also have more clarity to recognize the needs of our brothers and sisters. In our pursuit of simple living, we can meet the needs of our neighbors through noticing and fulfilling their needs.

## Focus: SIMPLE LIVING

It's difficult to hear God calling us when we're preoccupied by what we own. Attachment to our possessions and wealth distracts us from God and our relationship with him. Fortunately, we can avoid this by committing to simple living. As we take on simple living and empty our lives of clutter, we have more space for God. When we're feeling empty, instead of wanting more stuff, we can be like Mary and seek the Lord. This way, like our Blessed Mother, we can remain open to God so that we can listen to and be receptive of his plans for us.

## PRAYER

Dear God,

*I believe that you have good and beautiful plans for my life. I trust that you have chosen me for a purpose, a mission, and a service that only I can do because you have made me unique and unrepeatable in your image and likeness. I humbly ask you to give me the grace to say yes to you. Please help me to want what you want and give me the patience to trust in your timing. In all things, let me choose you. Give me the grace to allow your will, not mine, to be done. Amen.*

