



“Ain’t that Good News”

*A whisper of grace landed in my ear,
“You’re going to have a baby boy, Mary! Now
ain’t that good news?” But my mind captured
every question overwhelming me, and only
one found its way free. “How? Can this be?”*

*“Mary, don’t you know? Nothing is
impossible for God! Nothing!”*

*And that’s the only reminder I needed.
Somewhere inside of me something was
breathing life into my faith and calling me to
speak. These words came from the gut of my
soul where joy and pain, laughter and tears,
life and death are born. They came from a
place where God’s Spirit dwells. And that
soul smiled as these words journeyed from
my mouth. “I am the Lord’s. Let it be.”*

(Ciona D. Rouse)

Dear Friends in Christ,

This comes to you all with my very best wishes for a Holy and Happy Advent and Christmas season. I give thanks for the privilege of serving as your Archdeacon, and for your faithfulness in the ministries to which you have been called. I would like to thank my colleagues in ministry for their prayerful and practical support, and to those of you who have helped me learn the ropes along the way.

In my travels across the deanery I have been blessed to meet some truly special men and women who, very simply, love God and God's church, and give an enormous amount of their time, talent and money to grow God's kingdom in their corner of the vineyard. Our congregations are unique in every way, shape and form, yet the love of Christ connects us one to another. Please pray regularly for your sisters and brothers across our deanery as they continue in the work that lies before them.

In the midst of the busyness of the house decorating, gift buying, card writing, party planning, and Christmas pageant and service organizing, I hope that it will also be a time of inner reflection.

As you look back on the past year with the new opportunities you were given, along with the challenges and changes to your personal and church life, may you find the hand of God there. I watched some of you wait anxiously for news of a new pastor, and saw you welcome that person in love and openness. I walked alongside others of you as you faced financial challenges, or looked for new ways to be church. We did not always understand what was happening, but we placed our trust in God, and God did not let us down. Give thanks for that.

I pray that this will also be a time of looking ahead with hope and expectation to the New Year and all that God has in store for us. We never know, do we, how it will all work out? If we believe that God is already at work in ways that we cannot even imagine, we can look forward to something new and exciting. Let us keep our eyes firmly fixed on Christ and those dreams might just become a reality.

The reflection above, by Ciona Rouse, spoke to me on so many levels. The Angel's words to Mary, "Don't you know, nothing is impossible with God! Nothing!" were the only reminder Mary needed to say "Yes" to God. Not

knowing or understanding everything that lay ahead for her, she was still able to believe that God could see the big picture and that it would all work out.

May Mary's faith and trust in God give us faith to look out beyond the laughter and tears, the joy and the pain, the death and the life to that place where the Spirit of God dwells. And as we journey into the New Year may be, with Mary smile and say, "I am the Lord's, let it be."

Peace, Joy and Hope to you all!

Anne

The Ven. Anne Germond (Archdeacon of Sudbury/Manitoulin)