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# St. Mary by the Sea Catholic Church

PO Box 390 275 S Pacific Street Rockaway Beach OR 97136

**December 20, 2020**

*We are a loving, supportive, and vibrant Catholic community committed to being a welcoming parish family by spreading the Love of Jesus Christ throughout our community and into the world.*



## LIFE MESSAGES FROM TODAY'S GOSPEL

1. We need to say a courageous and generous "yes" to God: True obedience comes from a free choice made in the light of what is true and good. Such a self-surrender often requires a great deal of courage because it can involve going against the tide of social expectations. True obedience also aims to put oneself at the service of something or someone that is greater than oneself - accepting what God clearly wants us to do or what He wants to do through us. It is by saying (along with Jesus and Mary) a wholehearted and totally unconditional "Yes - May it be done in me," to Jesus so that he will be re-born in each of us, or maybe even born in me for the first time. By my saying "Yes," Jesus will be born or re-born in others, too.

2. We need to try to learn God's plan for our lives: The Good News in today's Scripture message is not only that God is making provision for the salvation of His people, but also that He has a plan for each individual person. In many cases, our work for God seems rather ordinary, but each ordinary task which we carry out fits into God's plan in ways that we cannot yet understand. God desires not only the skill of our hands and talents but the love of our hearts. The Baby Jesus in the Manger reminds us of what God has done and is still doing for us. We need to ask: What are we doing for Him in return? Let us show our gratitude to God by living as true followers of Christ: "Behold, here I am, Lord! I come to do Your will."

3. What can we do then in order to make our Christmas celebrations more meaningful? We should share God's love with one another, especially through this difficult year and through all the turmoil many of us have suffered. Many still suffer at this very moment and may endure more hardships in months to come. We must be the bearers of God's hope and peace, His joy and love to one another - particularly to those who have little or no hope and peace.

In these ways (mentioned above) and in other similar ways, we can celebrate Christmas as Christians - in which we rejoice not for ourselves, but for the whole community, together with God. In that way, we will be able to fully appreciate how important Christmas is to us, and how the love of God allows us to cheer up, be happy and hopeful once again; we know that, in Christ and through Him, the Lord (who is always faithful) has fulfilled His promises to us - and by His love, we shall forever enjoy His eternal glory.

Let us all be faithful bearers of God's love, and - through that - bring hope, peace and joy in our community, wherever we are. May God bless us all and guide us all to a most fruitful and loving Christmas celebration. Amen.

In Christ, Father Macdonald Akuti