

**Do Not Be Afraid**    Final Advent Days    Saturday, December 20, 2014    8:15 AM  
Is 7:10-14;    **Lk 1:26-38**    (We are here on earth to listen to God's message and to take it to others.)

**“Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.’”**

The truth is that **most people are afraid**, not always knowing what they are afraid of, but in general it is with a **sense of insecurity**. And **life does not come with all kinds of assurances**. **The message of the angel** is not from life. It's from something deeper or higher than life. It is a message from the source of life, but it's not just in the package of life. It **requires a certain sort of openness of heart and mind and ears to hear, and many of us are not so open**. Many people in the world are not so open. Those of us who are able to hear this message really need to spread this message. “Do not be afraid.”

The earth and **the world as we know it does seem a very scary place**, full of violence, discord, limited resources ruled by incompetent leaders, turbulent, subject to forces that no one has any idea how to control. And if that isn't bad enough, all the schemes that people think of to further their cause whatever it is, their profit whatever it is, enriching themselves, destroying their enemies, establishing their ideas in some earthly kingdom. **But in all this the angel says, “Do not be afraid.”** What you see is not what you get. **What is, is beyond what you can see**. As St. Paul put it, “The eye does not see, the ear does not hear, the mind does not imagine what God has prepared for those who love him.”

Meanwhile, **we are here on earth to listen to God's message and to take it to others**, to help others become part of something that is going to make a difference. But **we can't make a difference if we are afraid**. So we have to start there. “Do not be afraid. With God are all possibilities. **Nothing is impossible with God.**” Life can spring up from areas where we might think it's absolutely impossible. But for these possibilities to take form and root in this world they have to be cared for, nurtured, protected, and first and foremost believed in. **We have to believe in possibilities in order to further them**. So it does all really start with faith, but **we can't have faith if we are afraid**. So **we have to start by not being afraid and then believing that all things are possible, and then work with those possibilities and further them** and let them take root and really change the world for the better. This is really the message of the angel.