

## **STAINED GLASS REFLECTION – submitted by Jim Rispoli**

The Knights of Columbus are undertaking an effort to write reflections on each of our stained-glass windows. The Brother Knights are trying to share the joy of the Gospels with you through the beautiful images as did the early Catholics in their churches. This reflection is on “The Annunciation.” In this remarkable account, only found in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:26-38), the Archangel Gabriel visited Mary.

### **The Story of the Annunciation - Luke, Chapter 1, Verses 26-38**

“(T)he angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, ‘Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was greatly troubled at what was said, and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ But Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?’ And the angel said to her in reply, ‘The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.’ Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.’ Then the angel departed from her.”

### **Personal reflection of Jim Rispoli**

The account of the Annunciation, the beautiful event where the angel of God came to Mary to tell her what was to come, is shown in this stained-glass window. This is a story of faith, of trust, and of obedience. Mary displays her faith and trust by her response, “I am the handmaid of the Lord.” Her obedience, with trust in God, is shown when she said, “May it be done to me according to your word.” Mary’s faith and trust are examples for all of us, as we go through life and are confronted by often unexpected, and sometimes unwelcomed, situations. We draw upon our faith to accept these situations, and with trust in the Lord, we realize that God will provide an outcome for us.

As creatures of God, mortal, and imperfect, we may not always understand why challenges confront us throughout our lives. At times, our faith may be challenged; our response should be reliance on our faith in God, trust in God, and willingness to accept what God’s intention is for us. This story of the Annunciation and Mary’s response to it provides us a perfect example of what it means to accept the will of God. As the life of the Holy Family progresses, they will learn that there will be challenges and sadness in their lives as well, but at the end of the story, God’s intention is revealed with the Resurrection of Jesus, and offer of salvation for all of us.

This story also leads us to a devotion to Mary, seeing the esteem expressed for her by God and the angel He sent. When we are confronted with a challenge, an unwanted situation, or question our trust in God,

perhaps we should spend some time in the pew, reflecting on the image of the Annunciation in this stained-glass window. We see a perfect example of faith, trust, and obedience to God's will. "Not my will, but Thine, be done!"

