

Fourth Thursday of Lent ~ 3/22

"Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Luke (1:38)

Dan Schutte, S.J. wrote "Here I Am Lord" in the early eighties. It quickly became a smash hit on the liturgical song charts. There have always been powerful words and music about the desire to do God's will that will bring out the best in us. Singing it, getting caught up in the emotion can be helpful; however, living out this desire to be God's servant calls for something special.

One of the most outstanding characteristics of Mary may be her grit, her tenaciousness, and resolve to follow through with her promise. Saying, "Yes" to God in the fervor of the moment is one thing, but her day-in and day-out living of the promise meant finding strength and courage that would have to remain long after the emotion had departed.

Mary not only remained committed through the pregnancy and birth but she stayed faithful for the raising of the child, the letting go of the child and the death of the child. This commitment made the Christ-child her child.

When we sing or pray, "Here I am Lord. I want to do your will" do we really understand the commitment that must go along with it? Perhaps if we really did comprehend this statement we might find that when the organist or musicians play Schutte's song there would be very few people in the congregation singing along. Emotions can certainly stir us to respond but they will not sustain us through the journey. True commitment must be there even when the emotional high is not.

More than at any time it seems that we could use some of Mary's grit, her steadfast example. It seems that we have forgotten that the joy of the journey must be entwined with the pain. We may not do it as well as Mary but staying the course is what we are meant to do even when the road gets bumpy.

People all around us prove that it is possible to have this kind of courage. Married couples hang in there through thick and thin and still find that their love grows. The faithful religious sister or brother of fifty, sixty or more years has followed Jesus even when it did not make much sense. All are shining examples of the kind of courage that would make Mary proud. Ask one of these people about their desire to do God's will and find out what sustains them. Like Mary you may discover that they indeed are people of true grit.

Questions for Reflection

- 1. How tough is it for me to make a commitment to the call of God?*
- 2. If the call that God is offering me seems to want to take me where I don't want to go can I find the grit deep inside to stay the course?*