

Luke 1:26-38 Advent 4
December 20, 2020

Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and our returning Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

So, my favorite line in the Gospel reading today is verse 37. I think that might even be my mantra – “For nothing will be impossible with God.” Nothing will be impossible with God. Nothing.

It’s not that everything will be possible, but that nothing will be impossible. Can you see the difference?

For the one who created all that exists – nothing is impossible. It’s impossible to have nothing with God. With God there is only life, and that is made abundantly clear with Mary and Elizabeth in today’s readings.

In places where there should be no life, there is life – a place where there is nothing, God is doing something – and this is a foreshadowing of things to come - the empty tomb. Life where there should be no life.

Nothing is impossible with God.

And so throughout our lessons for today, we see how God takes nothing and makes something. It goes all the way back to Genesis 1 and the days of creation. There was nothing and then God used it for life. With God you can’t have nothing. It’s part of God’s very nature to make nothing disappear.

And so in 2 Samuel we hear about David. God has no house, and doesn’t really want a house. God likes to travel with the people and be with them. God doesn’t want to be stuck in the house – like us during Covid-19. We can all relate to that right?

God is relational and not being in relationship with the people is heartbreaking for God. God does not want to be boxed up, because as you may know if you have a storage shed, boxed up things become nothing. You forget about them.

But, with God nothing is impossible. There cannot be nothing with God.

And buried within the 2 Samuel text is a reminder that David, yes great King David, at one time was nothing. Originally he was just a young, stinky, redheaded shepherd, but then God made him into a king. Samuel thought all of David’s older brothers would make better kings, but God chose David.

God chose the nothing, because where everyone else saw nothing, David proclaimed with God nothing is impossible. David was the only one who could see that with God nothing is impossible and so God used him, just like with Mary.

In the second reading from Romans, the Gentiles were nothing. To the Jews they were nothing of importance, but God takes Paul and uses him to bring God's good news to the Gentiles, because Paul knew that nothing is impossible with God. Where others saw nothing, Paul knew that there can't be nothing with God, so he like David and Mary, were chosen by God.

And then in the Gospel reading we have Mary and Elizabeth. Mary is just a girl. Too young to have a baby. Elizabeth is an old woman – way too old to have a baby. And yet, God uses these barren wombs of nothing to create life – life for the sake of the whole world.

Everyone thought Mary and Elizabeth were nothing, but nothing is impossible with God, and so God uses them to testify to the world that nothing is impossible with God. With God, you can't have nothing, and that's what Mary proclaims in the Magnificat.

Elizabeth's pregnancy is an answer to her prayer. A prayer God answers with purpose. John will lead the way for Jesus. He is the prophet who will announce the Saviors coming.

Mary, however, isn't even married yet. A baby is something she imagines for her future with Joseph, not something to happen before she even gets married. But God sees her willing spirit and invites her into the redemption of the whole world. Like David, Mary can see what others cannot – nothing is impossible with God.

In these two women, God answers prayers – prayers for life. Prayers for an end to nothingness, and when you pray to God, who is the creator of all that exists, who creates out of nothing, prayers like that get answered, because nothing is impossible with God.

Where there is nothing, God creates life. Life is found in the empty wombs of Mary and Elizabeth, and life is found in a tomb outside of Jerusalem.

Nothing is impossible with God.

God is the life giver, the creator, and as days get darker, we remember that it is the darkest of places of nothing that miracles take place. Here and now, we really need to remember that. God creates out of nothing.

Mary, Elizabeth, David, and Paul knew that nothing was impossible with God. Through Jesus life, death, and resurrection, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we also know that nothing is impossible with God.

So, how might we be like Mary, Elizabeth, David, and Paul in our day to day lives? How does the mantra – nothing is impossible with God impact what we do in the world, because if worship doesn't make a difference in our Monday-Saturdays, then I'm doing something wrong.

So, as you go about your business from now on, take a look and find the places of nothingness.

Are there people who have been marginalized for being nothing? Is there a polluted area where toxins have been dumped, because someone thought that that area was nothing? Is there someone who you have dismissed as being nothing to you anymore? Has someone told you that you are nothing? Does your life feel to you like nothing?

Where is there nothing in your life and how might God be calling you to be like Mary, Elizabeth, Paul, and David? How might God be using you to proclaim nothing is impossible with God?

You can't have nothing with God. Nothing is not possible with God.

Thanks be to God.