

Fourth Sunday of Advent

During these final days of Advent Karen and I have reflected together about the person of Mary. Some sources say Mary was a teenager, possibly just fourteen at the time of the annunciation. We considered some of the fourteen year old girls we know, or even our daughter when she was fourteen. What hope would we have for a fourteen year old pregnant girl in our society? Marriage sure would not be one of the options. The Bible tells us Joseph had his doubts. In a remote village over 2000 years ago a teenage girl through her openness to the Holy Spirit changed all of history. That is worth us pondering during this Advent time of waiting. Each of us is called to make choices of allowing the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. How we respond to that call may seem insignificant yet affect more lives than we ever know. We are in no way trying to imply that our yeses in life are as important as Mary's. We recalled how the late Father John McCluskey, who offered Weekends in both English and Spanish, would say he looked forward to going to heaven so that he might see how the Weekends he had given had radiated love out to touch many lives.

As we complete our Advent and start into the celebration of Christmas we ask you to take some time to consider how we each affect others around us. The small courtesies we extend to harried store clerks, the way we respond to the crowds of people in lines at stores and the words we mutter while stuck in traffic are observed by our children. Our actions can either create positive influences of peace and love or they can support discontent. Hopefully as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the anniversary of the Lord's coming into the world as the incarnate Word of love and attempt to make ourselves ready for His coming again either at the hour of our death or at the end of the world we can remember that even small acts of kindness or encouraging words can have affects beyond our knowing.