



Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish

Advent Retreat - Week Three

Guided Advent Reflection

From Brigid DeMoor's *Trust in God* in the Formed.org Advent series
(video and full study guide available through [Formed.org](https://www.formed.org))

This reflection covers the fallout of distrust and broken relationships between people and God throughout human history, from Genesis ([3:1-19](#)), then to signs of hope from the prophets: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel” ([Isaiah 7:14](#)).

The Angel Gabriel appears to Daniel during Israel’s captivity, and anticipates the Annunciation to Mary:

“While I was speaking, and was praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God— while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen before in a vision, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. He came* and said to me, ‘Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding. At the beginning of your supplications a word went out, and I have come to declare it, for you are greatly beloved. So consider the word and understand the vision:

‘Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city: to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy one’” ([Daniel 9:20-24](#)).

The Angel Gabriel appears in the appointed time to Zechariah, who doubts and is given time in silence to ponder and become receptive to God’s Plan:

“Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, ‘Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.’ Zechariah said to the angel, ‘How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.’ The angel replied, ‘I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been

sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur” ([Luke 1:11-20](#)).

We read earlier in this series of Advent retreats, from the Annunciation, that the Angel Gabriel then said to Mary:

“Do not be afraid, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end” ([Luke 1:30-38](#)).

This Scripture shows that Mary is already in relationship with God and chosen by God (‘The LORD is with you’ - as the LORD is with Moses, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua, and David). She has the gifts appropriate to her given role ([Catechism of the Catholic Church # 490](#)). Mary knows the gravity of the Annunciation. She makes a great act of trust, and says yes to God in her *fiat*. She becomes the ‘Mother of the living’ ([Catechism of the Catholic Church # 494](#)). She brings about a new era in Christ Jesus, in which we are called to respond in trust to God through Holy Communion, Adoration, Confession, Prayer, and contemplative silence.

After praying the [Hail Mary](#) and the [Angelus](#):

- ✦ In what ways can someone’s lack of trust in others impact their relationship with God?
- ✦ What are you missing out on in life because you don’t trust?
- ✦ What connections do you see between Daniel’s prophecy and the Annunciation?
- ✦ Imagine that your friend comes to you and says, “I think Mary is really beautiful and her story is wonderful, but I don’t feel like I can relate to her life at all. She was sinless, and she raised the Son of God! I don’t understand why the Church raises her up as a model disciple, because my life will never be like hers.” How would you respond?