

December 2011: SD Website

YES LORD, HERE I AM

Fellow Pilgrims:

We are now in Advent, preparing for the birth of the baby Jesus in a manger in Bethlehem. I want you to consider all the people who were willing to following the leading of God during the preparation for Jesus' birth. Each one had to say and act in such a way that "Yes Lord, here I am." became a reality. This struck home to me once again when we sang *Here I Am* during his ordination to the priesthood this week.

We see Isaiah having a vision (Isaiah 6: 8-13) and God asking, *Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?* Isaiah answers, *Here am I. Send me!* Think of all the people who had to say *Yes* to God in order for the baby Jesus to be born in the manger. We can read these stories in Matthew 1:18-2:23 and Luke 1:26-56, 2:1-20. To begin with, Mary had to say *Yes* to God in order to become pregnant. She ran real risks of being accused of violating her betrothal to Joseph. She could have been called an adulteress and been stoned to death. Nonetheless, she said *Yes*.

Joseph could have rejected her story and her. Yet after a dream, he did not put aside the betrothal. Three more times Joseph said *Yes* to God's messages in dreams. He was warned to flee to Egypt and he did. He was told to return to Israel after King Herod died and he was warned not to go to Judah but to Galilee and they lived in Nazareth. In all these cases, he followed the Lord's guidance.

The shepherds heard the message of the Angels and sought out Jesus. They could have ignored what they saw, but instead they left their flocks and found the Messiah. They too said *Yes*. The Magi said *Yes* twice. They followed the star and found the King of Kings. They paid attention to their dream and did not return to Herod as Herod had wished.

I pray that during Advent and throughout the year, you prayerfully look for the guidance of God and say *Yes Lord, here am I*. I want to end with the lyrics to *Here I Am Lord*

*I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin, My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them? Whom shall I send?*

*Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.*

*I, the Lord of snow and rain. I have born my peoples pain.
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My word to them, Whom shall I send?*

*Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.*

*I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save
Finest bread I will provide, Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them, Whom shall I send?*

*Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.*

Amen.

In Christ's love,
Chuck Ellenbaum ><>+
Spiritual Director