**Nothing Is Impossible With God**

**Imagine getting through your busy day without arms or legs. Impossible? Picture your life without the ability to walk, care for your basic needs, or even embrace those you love. I would like to introduce you to Nicholas Vujicic (pronounced VOO-yee-cheech). Without any medical explanation or warning, Nick was born in 1982 in Melbourne, Australia, without arms and legs. Nick’s family was destined to cope with both the challenge and blessing of raising a son who refused to allow his physical condition to limit his lifestyle. He eventually married and has his own children now.**

**The early days were difficult. Throughout his childhood, Nick not only dealt with the typical challenges of school and adolescence, but he also struggled with depression and loneliness. Nick constantly wondered why he was different than all the other kids. He questioned the purpose of life, or if he even had a purpose.**

**According to Nick, the victory over his struggles, as well as his strength and passion for life today, can be credited to his faith in God. His family, friends and the many people he has encountered along the journey have inspired him to carry on, as well.**

**Since his first speaking engagement at age 19, Nick has traveled around the world, sharing his story with millions, sometimes in stadiums filled to capacity, speaking to a range of diverse groups such as students, teachers, young people, business professionals and church congregations of all sizes. He’s an author, musician, actor, and his hobbies include fishing, painting and swimming. Nick is the president of the international non-profit ministry, Life Without Limbs.**

**Nick says, “If God can use a man without arms and legs to be His hands and feet, then He will certainly use any willing heart!” Nick believes that nothing is impossible with God.**

**Gabriel's announcement to Mary in today’s Gospel is also surrounded by the impossible. The angel's revelation that "nothing is impossible for God" finds its deepest meaning in that impossibility overflows that a young teenage girl from a nothing town is favored.**

**Mary herself acknowledges the impossible possibility of God with her first response to Gabriel. She is perplexed and troubled. She deliberates about the angel's greeting when the only thing Gabriel has said so far is, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." Mary's initial response to this encounter is worth significant pause. The angel has barely said a thing.**

**Why is Mary confused? To call attention to Mary's response to the angel's first words is to emphasize to what extent Mary cannot even believe this impossible possibility. Me? Who am I? Why am I favored? How can the Lord be with me? She recognizes her place. She knows who she is. And this should not be happening to her. She was a teenager, probably only 13 or 14 years old, and from the wrong side of the tracks.  Gabriel then tells her the big news that she's going to be pregnant with a son, but not just any son, the Son of the Most High. "How can this be?" Surely, we can understand Mary’s disbelief and amazement. We also have to understand in the time of Mary and Joseph, to be pregnant and not married was a disgrace. Mary also would have known that there was a good likelihood Joseph would not go through with their marriage. And yet she said yes.**

 **You see, God has used both Nick and Mary in very profound ways to build His Kingdom. I hope we all understand that we too are asked to help build God’s kingdom. We are all called to say yes just like Nick and Mary. Clearly, neither of them understood why these things were happening to them. They did not make excuses but responded with a yes.**

**What excuses do we make in our lives to evade our yes to God? I’m too busy at work. I’m not smart enough. I’m not this, that or the other thing. All excuses.**

 **God also calls those who are privileged in society as well. In our first reading God uses King David for His glory.**

**Let’s think about those that Jesus hand-picked as His disciples. They were simple men who were fishermen, tax collectors, and zealots. The Apostles were Jesus’ first round draft picks. By the way, in the NFL last year, the first-round picks got four year contracts totaling $30 million for the 1st pick and $8 million for the 32nd.**

 **I’m sure by now you’re asking yourself, Deacon Tom, what’s your point? Let’s look at those people we have heard about today. It didn’t matter whether they were simple fishermen, a teenage girl from the wrong side of the tracks, a man born without arms or legs, or a king. They all said yes even though they had doubts, insecurities or were troubled. When I think about these people I know that I can be used by God for the purposes he has for my life. Obviously, I will not be asked to bear the child of God, but I can use the gifts God has given me to further His kingdom.**

 **We see at every Mass the impossible becomes possible. This impossible becoming possible is bread and wine becoming the very body and blood of Christ at the altar. We know nothing is impossible with God because we live it as part of our daily faith journey.**

 **Bottom line, every one of us has been blessed by God with the capacity to do something beautiful with our lives. Sing in the choir, be an altar server, be a home visitor to shut-ins, inspire our children to be faith filled people. The list goes on and on. I ask you this week to discern for yourself what you are being called to do. Spend some time in prayer this week and make a plan for yourself and your future going forward about how you can better serve the Lord. For those of you thinking about the diaconate, give me a call. No seriously, if any of you wish to discuss your discernment, please contact me and we can talk.**

 **I want you to remember, we are all God’s first round draft choices. We may not make $30 million like that NFL player, but we have something greater, Eternal Salvation!!**

 **Remember, nothing is impossible with God!!!!**