

We begin our Advent sermon series ***Home for the Holidays***.

1. *Home for the Holidays* ... close your eyes and reflect and image being home for the holidays; what does that mean to you?
2. When you “go home,” where do you go? Is it a place? A person? Relationships? A memory?
3. Think about what makes you feel at home. Be prepared to describe the qualities of home to your IG.
4. **Read and reflect on Luke 1:26-38.** Sit and reflect with this rich passage for about 10 minutes. We don't know what Mary was doing when Gabriel came to visit. We can be sure it was an unexpected visit. Imagine how startled Mary must have been when Gabriel appeared and said, “Hail favored one.”
 - What questions, thoughts and feelings might have run through her mind and soul?

Read verse 30. Gabriel states that Mary had found favor with God.

- What do you think this might have meant?
- How might you find favor with God? What in your life might need to be transformed/changed/matured?

Read verses 31-38. Reflect on the invitation that Gabriel brings to Mary to be an intimate part of God's plan of salvation for the world.

- Do you think Mary had any idea how this encounter would change her life? Why? Why not?
- Why do you think Mary answered by saying; “May it be done to me according to your word?”
- Do you think Mary could have said no? Reflect on why we tell God no when he invites us to obedience to His will in our lives.

- Could God be inviting you to join Him in something special this advent season?
- Reflect on what it will take for you to say, “*May it be done to me according to your word.*”

5. **Read Luke 1:39-45.** The Scripture tell us that Mary went “in haste” or in a hurry to visit with her cousin Elizabeth.

- In reflecting on what Mary has recently experienced, why do you think she might have gone to visit with Elizabeth? Why so quickly?
- What might she have been looking for? What do you think Mary was hoping for in this visit?
- What did they have in common that might have connected them to one another?
- How did this visit affect Elizabeth? What amazing proclamation does Elizabeth make? How might this have comforted Mary?
- What do you think they talked about for the 3 months (Luke 1:56) they spent together?

6. How do you think Mary and Elizabeth experienced ***home*** together during their 3-month visit?

- Describe what characteristics or qualities of family and home you believe Mary and Elizabeth shared.
- How might this visit have supported each woman in the days ahead?
- How do you experience home in your Ignition Group?

As we begin Advent this year, pray that your heart may be open to whatever invitation God has for you and your IG this year to join Him in Igniting Passion for Jesus Christ to the world around you. For example, *The Nativity Story*, which opened in theaters this weekend, is a great opportunity to invite a friend to the movies and open a conversation about the Christ of Christmas.