

Pondering Throughout Advent  
"The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.  
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.  
Behold the handmaid of the Lord.  
Be it done unto me according to thy Word.  
And the word was made flesh,  
And dwelt among us.  
Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,  
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ."



**My, what a galaxy.... a universe of meaning to ponder. And what better time to quietly ruminate than the gestational weeks of Advent. Advent always leads to a birth, a new birth in our understanding, a new level of love in our souls, a new becoming.**

I've been reading slowly a book borrowed from the library at Our Lady of the Adirondacks. It is entitled *Jesus Christ: The Holy One of God* and is a series of meditations on Christ given to the Papal Household by Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap. In it he ponders, in the second chapter "Jesus Christ, the New Human Being," the **true** essence of being human, not from a perspective of being sinful, but from the being holy in obedience to the will of the Father. "The Fathers expressed this by distinguishing, in Genesis 1:26, between the concepts of 'image' and 'likeness'.

Human beings are by nature of birth 'in the image of God, but become 'in his likeness' only during their lives by an effort to be like God, by obedience." In another sentence, he states, "But, for the Bible, the human being is not only *nature*, but also, in equal measure, *vocation*: the human being is that which is called-to-become, by the exercise of free-will in obedience to God.

Isn't it a marvel that the Holy Spirit takes two little words, "**nature and vocation**", and breaks open meaning in a new birth of understanding.

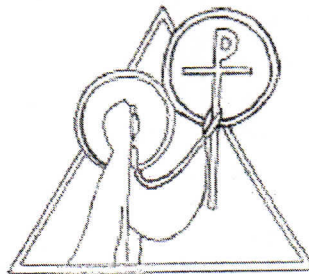
Our *putting on the new Adam* brings us to a new birth in Christ..we are becoming, what the original Model of Human Nature is already. "We are the ones who are called to become 'conformed to the image which is the Son (Rom 8:29) much more than Jesus is called to become conformed to any image of ours."

Well...this is after all, what we have always been taught ...this is not a new teaching, but it should lead to an ever-deepening understanding. Are we open to **our becoming**, our **vocation**...to becoming the likeness of the Son, Son of Man, Son of God? "So Jesus is 'true man', not *in spite of* being without sin but precisely *because* his is without sin." Fr. Cantalamessa states, "The Fathers of the Church loved to repeat, 'God became man, so that man might become God.' That axiom, in our own day, we should supplement with this other: God became man, so that man might become human! Fully, genuinely human."

**May this season of Advent bring us much joy, even during the labor of a new Birth, a new Becoming!**

**Happy Birthday, dear Son of Mary, Son of God made Flesh.**

**The House of Prayer, Continues to Ponder Its Vocation...Its Becoming!**



**Many people have asked us over the years, "But what do you DO?"** And it is, truthfully, hard to explain, for it is more about what we ARE, then what we do. Truly, I think of the House of Prayer as a type of womb...a special place of Mary and under Mary's blessing.

It is a place of restful quiet where those who are open, as Mary was, come and spend some gestational time listening to the Lord that they might bear fruit which will last.

It is a place of nourishment for healthy living. There is a library full of the most nutritious reading, grounds which are so lovely to walk around, and Our Lord Jesus, always Present.

When the Coronavirus subsides, we hope to see a rebirth of activity at the House of Prayer: **Small Ultreya groups are welcome! As are Life In the Spirit! Healing Ministry! Marriage Encounter! Adoration! Bible Study! Masses! Intercessory Prayer Groups! Retreats and Advances!**

Meanwhile, please call and talk with us. We are open by appointment, using the guidelines issued through the Diocese for any gathering or meeting, which must be kept very small and respectful of the necessary health precautions of masks, social distancing, disinfecting, contact tracing information.

**We also ask you to call us if you believe you have a VOCATION to become part of the House of Prayer in a fresh way. Perhaps you are called to become a dynamic member on our Board of Directors, perhaps you would like to volunteer as a House Sitter in the Spring, Summer, Fall of 2021 or help plan a Rosary Garden...lead a small Bible Study...undertake Adoration on a regular schedule. Your heart is open, and the Lord is using you.** Please give us a call to let us know how He would like to use your gifts at Our Lady's House of Prayer.

**518-594-3253 House of Prayer. For more immediate assistance, call: 518-236-6832 (Jeanette San Souci) or 518-846-3060 (Sarah Anderson).**