

When I was working as an RA in Student Housing at a Catholic University a few years ago, we were in the middle of a housing crisis. Now, this housing crisis had been going on in various levels of magnitude for several years; and no real solution had been found.

In a staff meeting, one of our higher-ups ended a presentation on the state of the current housing crisis by saying, “If any of you know anybody with a few million dollars laying around, let us know.”

Before I could think of how I was going to look, my hand shot up.

Next thing I know, all eyes were on me.

My boss said, in front of the whole room, “David, do you know someone with a million dollars laying around?”

Nothing better to do than say what was on my mind, I replied, “Yes. I do know someone with money laying around. God. God has all the money we need, has anybody thought about asking Him?”

There was some chuckling, and people turned back around to face the front. I had comments whispered at me about being a ‘smart aleck’ or worse.

But you know what happened?

The Student Housing department set aside one hour on every Wednesday for the entire year to come together in front of the Blessed Sacrament, and pray about the housing crisis. So, every Wednesday, mostly in silence, about 20 people joined in prayer for a solution to our problem.

In April, the Dean of Students made an announcement another Student Housing staff meeting. He had a “secret” to tell us. It turned out that at the latest University board meeting, it had been decided that money would be set aside to build a new dormitory.

One of my co-workers turned around, slugged me in the shoulder and said, “Jenuwine, you sure do have crazy faith.”

In the Gospel, we hear the story of the Annunciation. The angel comes to Mary and announces that she will be the mother of the Savior.

While there are all sorts of theological implications in this section of Luke’s Gospel, the most impressive is Our Lady’s Faith.

A young girl is told, “you’re going to have a baby.” And her only concern is that she doesn’t know how it’s going to happen. That is, she takes it on Faith that what the Angel of the Lord says is going to happen ... but is puzzled by the fact that she isn’t in a position to have this happen to her.

A few verses earlier in this chapter of Luke, if we look back at the birth announcement of John the Baptist, the same Angel comes to Zechariah, and pretty much tells him the same thing. Zechariah, doesn’t take it on Faith, but rather says, “I don’t know.” That is, Zechariah can’t figure out how God can do such a thing, and goes on to tell the Angel that he and his wife are too old to have a child.

What happens to Zechariah is that in return for telling God he’s not sure this is going to happen, he can’t talk for nine whole months. In a sense, Zechariah is told “shut up and watch.” And after the birth of John, after having seen the miracle, Zechariah is given his voice back. And he proclaims God’s glory in a hymn we know as the “Benedictus.”

After he struggled, mute for nine months, and his understanding got out of the way of his Faith, he was finally able to speak and not only speak, but praise God's glory.

And what we have just heard, the Angel comes to Mary. And with amazing Faith, in fact maybe I could quote my former colleague and say, crazy Faith, Our Lady accepts what is said by the Angel and says, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

And when she meets up a few verses later with Zechariah's wife Elizabeth, she proclaims God's glory in the hymn we know as the "Magnificat."

She doesn't argue. She doesn't need to understand. All she needs is Faith. And that Faith

Now, Faith is not opposed to Reason. In writing about Faith and Reason the late Holy Father said,

Faith therefore has no fear of reason, but seeks it out and has trust in it. Just as grace builds on nature and brings it to fulfillment, so faith builds upon and perfects reason. Illumined by faith, reason is set free from the fragility and limitations deriving from the disobedience of sin and finds the strength required to rise to the knowledge of the Triune God ... [that is,] reason is neither annulled nor debased in assenting to the contents of faith, which are in any case attained by way of free and informed choice.

I think that in our current technological society, we as contemporary Christians, are often held back by our reason. If we can't figure things out, we tend to discount them as false, or silly, or stupid.

Faith shouldn't be afraid of reason, and reason isn't damaged by faith.

And following Mary's example, we should "step out in faith" that is allow our faith to stretch us beyond the limits of our understanding.

The popular song, "I Want To Feel Christmas Like A Child," calls out for a child-like acceptance of the beauty of this season, to experience the joy of the birth of the savior.

I want to feel Christmas, how it used to be  
With all of its wonder falling on me  
This season has felt so empty, oh for quite a while  
I want to feel Christmas like a child

So, let us ask God to give us "crazy faith." Faith that lets us go beyond our human understanding of things, and allows us to rise in supernatural Faith.

It's all about Jesus, asleep in the straw  
This infant, this King, this Savior for all

In these last days of preparation, not only the holiday busyness, but also the spiritual preparation – let us pray for an over-abundance of faith to balance out our contemporary reasoning – not fighting to understand, but actively receiving with faith, the love poured out on us by our Loving God ... so that we can, in a few short days receive the fullness and the wonder of this holy season, and feel Christmas ... with Faith ... like a child ... a child of God ... let us pray that we may "feel Christmas" like God's beloved child.