



4th Sunday in Advent
“We’ll name it Blueberry”
Dec. 18, 2011

*Prayer: “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior”. Luke 1:46b.*

Over the summer, Vaughn and I were invited to have dinner with our son and daughter in law. This was a bit of an unusual request from them. Not that we don’t mind getting together with them, because we really enjoy spending time with our son and daughter in law. It was unusual because it was in the middle of the week, something that almost never happens between their schedules and ours.

And so it was, on a Thursday night in July that we met them at Hershey Farm. Normally on time, they were running late. They had called and told us they would be running late, and to start without them. When they arrived, both our son and daughter in law quickly greeted us before leaving the table. Vaughn and I looked at each other, wondering. Andy, our son, had a rectangular object under his arm, never pausing to set it on the table. Neither one of us thought anything of their behavior other than Carlisle to Strasburg can be a long drive on the turnpike when too much water or tea is consumed on the road trip.

During dinner, nothing was said about the wrapped rectangular object now sitting between Andy and Holly. Both helped themselves to the buffet. Gradually, their normal mild manners returned. As we neared the end of the meal, Holly began to pull something out of her purse. At the same time, Andy’s hand moved toward the wrapped rectangular object that had been between them.

Clearing his throat slightly, Andy thanked us for the love and support we had given he and Holly over the past three years as he completed law school. He proceeded to hand us the wrapped rectangular object with words along the lines of “and we wanted to give you a little something to thank you for love and support.”

We still did not know what this was about, but we said thank you, and began to unwrap the gift we had been given. By this time, Holly had pulled a small video camera out of her purse, and was recording us opening the gift. The gift was a picture frame with three openings. One slot had “mom” underneath with a picture of Holly pointing to her stomach. The next slot had “dad” underneath with a picture of Andy. The third slot had “me” underneath and a picture of an ultrasound. – Yes, you guessed it – Andy and Holly were telling us they are going to be parents.

Now, I love Vaughn dearly, I really really do. Some days, it can seem that even though we are talking English, we are speaking two different dialects to one another. This was one of those times. Vaughn at first saw only the frame and not the captions underneath the openings. As he’s commenting about how nice the frame is, I have just about jumped across the table to envelope Andy and Holly in the biggest bear hug I possibly can manage – without knocking sodas, teas, or waters off the table we were at. “YOU’RE EXPECTING?!?!?!?” I all but shouted. “YEH!!!!”

The excitement about Andy and Holly being parents does not diminish or negate the love we have for our daughter, son-in-law and their two children. We love our daughter and her family. It’s just that we have also known Andy and Holly have wanted a family, but wanted to wait before doing so.

We wonder what the child will look like. We wonder how the other two grandchildren from our daughter and son in law will react to another “pint sized” person tagging behind as they grow older. We

wonder what the future will hold for this new grandchild. We wonder what the world will be like as the child grows. We wonder how much we will be able to share with this new addition in the family.

We have a name for this new grandchild. We call the child “Blueberry”. This was something we picked up from Andy and Holly when they first told us this news. “Blueberry” is a unique name – probably one not found in any of the top baby books of 2011! But it is a name. Somehow, having a name, or perhaps a nickname at that, makes the waiting much more meaningful, all that more significant. Waiting for “Blueberry” is excitedly waiting to meet this new person, to share life with him or her, and waiting also to see how God is and will continue to work in “Blueberry’s” life.

And as we wait, I cannot help but think of Mary, her expecting, her waiting, wondering, and pondering all these things in her heart. So many things to take in on so many different levels!

First, there was the visit from Gabriel. This was not an everyday occurrence. Yet Gabriel reassures Mary that the Lord is with her, that she has found favor with God. Not only has she found favor, but she will be the mother of God’s Son – who would be the Savior of the World!

But notice Mary’s reaction to this news. While she questions how this can be since she is engaged, but not married, she does not run away in panic or fear. She does not tell Gabriel that Gabriel has the wrong person, or that she is not interested in being mother to Savior of the World. Rather, Mary accepts this news. In accepting it, she embraces it, declaring herself to be a servant of the Lord.

Second, there is the overarching reality that Mary is mother – not to just any child, but to Jesus, the Son of the Most High. Talk about high expectations!!

Third, Mary willingly embraces this new call, this new challenge in her life. She names herself a servant of the Lord. She recognizes that God, the Lord, the Holy One has a plan and a purpose for her in the grander plan of salvation for all the world.

Who among us would respond in the same way? I suspect some of us might think or say, “no way would I want to be part of this plan.” Yet the reality is, in spite of our shortcomings, in spite of our unpreparedness, in spite of who we are as both saint and sinner, is the reality God includes each and every one of us in His plan of salvation. And, God came, not in power and might as people thought or expected. God came – taking on the form of humanity – living with us instead of the Temple David wanted to build for him. God came to live among us as one of us.

This is the Good News we have been waiting to hear. This is the Good News we have been waiting to share. Unto us a Son is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his shoulders, and His name shall be called “Wonderful, Counselor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

May God who came among us continue to grant us grace and mercy as we continue to wait.