



Tiffany Perez

*Hail Mary:*

*December 2002*

*As I sat down to write my Christmas message this year I experienced writer's block. After four years of Christmas messages centered on an aspect of the Christmas story, I could not come up with a theme. So I turned to Hollywood. What does Hollywood do when it cannot come up with a sequel? It invented the prequel. So this year I looked ahead and chose the Annunciation as my theme.*

*As the story goes an angel appeared to Mary, a young, perhaps in her early teens, virgin girl and announced to her that she was to be the mother of the Savior of the world. Can you imagine that? Well perhaps we should. We could learn a lot from Mary and her response then and throughout her life.*

*Mary's response to the Annunciation was, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Can you imagine any of us responding in that way to such an outrageous request? In essence she raised no question, did not negotiate for a better deal, just said okay, fine, and trusted in God. Mary risked her own life for she could have been stoned for becoming pregnant out of wedlock and risked the reputation and fortunes of her family to bring into the world our Savior. In that moment she allowed her life to be turned upside down by giving her life entirely to God.*

*Perhaps this year you could dwell on the story of the Annunciation. Get out your Bible and read Luke 1:21-38. Consider what Mary must have gone through in that instant and in the hours and months until she delivered the baby Jesus. And consider what the rest of her life was like, in essence sacrificing and allowing her son to sacrifice himself for others.*

*And consider if you would this Christmas season that there is an Annunciation to us. We are invited to bring the Savior into the world and to bring salvation to others, every day. To do that we need to accept love, nurture it, help it to grow and give it to others. When invited how do we respond?*

*Listen, there is someone knocking at your door. You respond "just a minute I am coming". The person knocking says "Hail Mary" and you say.....*

*Peace,*