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Message for BBNeighbourhoods
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My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

In our Catholic tradition, the month of October is dedicated to the Rosary. It is particularly meaningful for us in the Diocese of Broken Bay because our Cathedral is dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. The Parishes of Wyoming and The Entrance also enjoy the patronage of Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary.

The Gospel reading for the Mass of the feast is Luke's account of the Annunciation ([Luke 1: 26-38](#)). The Gospel recounts for us the moment when Mary is told that she will be a blessed Mother. The Church in her wisdom has made this moment part of our liturgical year, to remind us of this momentous junction in the story of our salvation.

During this October, I invite you to spend some time each day praying the Rosary. Try not to make it a series of repetitious prayers. Instead, see the meditation as a moment of encounter with Jesus, in the company of His Blessed Mother. If you are not used to praying the Rosary, it might be a challenge at first. Might I suggest that you begin by praying with someone else, or with your family after dinner in the evening.

Each mystery is designed to give us a sense of the wondrous moments when God breaks into human history and therefore into our lives. The mysteries remind us that God's entering into our history is not an abstract proposition, but a personal encounter. The Lord does not just come, He comes to us. And in coming to us, the Lord gives us this invitation, to become a fragrant sacrifice for the life of the world (cf Ephesians 5:2).

Nothing gives God more joy, my sisters and brothers, than hearing that someone has accepted the Divine invitation to live life to the full. And nothing gives the world more joy, true joy, than receiving the gift of Jesus Christ into our lives. This is how stupendous a moment the Annunciation is.

The medieval saint and scholar, Bernard of Clairvaux, beautifully spelled out just how important this moment was. In a prayer to Mary, written as if he were there himself, St Bernard wrote: *The price of our salvation is offered to you. We shall be set free at once if you consent... In your brief response we are to be remade in order to be recalled to life. Tearful Adam with his sorrowing family begs this of you, O loving Virgin... Abraham begs it, David begs it... This is what the whole earth waits for, prostrate at your feet... Answer quickly, O Virgin. Reply in haste to the angel, or rather through the angel to the Lord. Answer with a word, receive the Word of God. Speak your own word, conceive the Divine Word. Breathe a passing word, embrace the eternal Word.*

We know Mary's words in response. And with these words, Mary becomes both the Blessed Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and the model of discipleship for every single one of us. Like Mary, we are invited to be open to God, and say "yes" to God when we are called. Like Mary, we are invited to carry Jesus with us in our life, in the community of the Church, and to those that we encounter in the world.

In the words of St Paul, we "put on Christ" (cf Galatians 3:27), so that in our encounters with others, they may come to encounter Christ, and savour the life that God planned for the world from the very beginning. It can be an encounter with God through us, his humble servants.

This month of the Rosary is a reminder of the pivotal moment of transformation that can come with every encounter with the Lord, and the powerful transformations that occur when we respond to that encounter with Mary's yes.

May Our Lady of the Rosary pray for us all that we may come to recognise God's calling in every moment of our lives, and may we be granted Mary's courage to echo her words "Let what you have said be done unto me".

Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us.

+Anthony