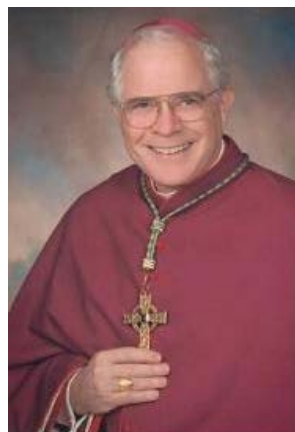


**Address of His Excellency
Bishop Edward Slattery**
to friends of the Annunciation Monastery of
Clear Creek gathered at the Crowne Plaza
Hotel
on the evening of **November 5, 2005.**



Tulsa, November 5, 2005.

Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Pere Abbe Antoine Forgeot of Our Lady of the Assumption of Fontgombault Monastery,

Father Philip Anderson and dearly beloved monks of Our Lady of the Annunciation of Clear Creek Monastery,

Father Richard John Neuhaus, our distinguished guest speaker,

Father Abbots, brother priests and deacons, beloved religious men and women and friends of the monks of Our Lady of the Annunciation of Clear Creek Monastery,

Welcome to the Diocese of Tulsa. We are honored by your presence.

This evening I call your attention to the central moment in human history: Two thousand years ago all of humanity waited with fear and trembling for one woman's response. Our hope, the hope of the world, rested on Mary's answer.

Let me repeat those familiar words from the Gospel of Saint Luke: "The Angel Gabriel said, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus.' ... Mary said to the Angel: 'How can this be since I have no husband? The Angel answered, 'It is by the Holy Spirit that you will conceive.'" And now, the words the whole world waited for: "Mary said: *Ecce Ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.* 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word.'"

We thank God tonight for Mary's response, for from her response came the Savior of the world.

We also thank God for leading the monks of Our Lady of the Annunciation to this country, to this diocese, to this hidden, unknown place named Clear Creek right in the center of the United States.

Just as from Nazareth, a hidden unknown place, not even of the map, "the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us" so from Clear Creek, the Word becomes flesh every day and dwells amongst us, as the monks celebrate Mass and pray the Divine Office throughout the day, every day.

The silent presence of the monks speaks. They remind us to value and cherish that hidden life that was given in Baptism. We need the monks, who, like Mary, live a hidden life. Their very hiddenness challenges us to be like Mary, the lowly handmaid of the Lord silently listening and waiting for the Lord to speak, like a never-ending Advent, waiting and watching for the Lord.

Like Mary, the monks live in perpetual attentiveness to the voice of God who calls because He wants intimacy with each of us. Thus by his very existence the monk is an instrument of God in a world that hungers for silence in its desperate search for an interior life.

Yes, we need the monks. We need them near us. We need their prayers, their silence, their witness.

May the Father of Jesus send down His Holy Spirit so that through the intercession of Saint Benedict He may renew the face of the earth.

Thank you.