



25th March, 2020

Feast of the Annunciation

Suggestion:

Create a **Sacred Space** in your home to help to focus on the sense of the sacred .

See suggestion below for the Feast of the Annunciation



Make the sign of the Cross

Background to the Feast of the Annunciation:

The Solemnity of the Annunciation celebrates the coming of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary to announce to her the special mission God had chosen for her in being the mother of His only son.

We are continually reminded of the importance of this feast to our salvation in various devotional prayers. Two examples that highlight the importance of this feast are the Angelus and the joyous mysteries of the Rosary.

This feast is very important in the defence of the life of unborn children. Even with small children, this is a good day to begin teaching about the high value God places on human life. He loved us so much that he became one of us, took on our human nature and became an innocent, completely dependent infant.

Listen to God's Word: Luke 1: 26 - 38



In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and

you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Reflection on Mary at the time of the Annunciation

Although Nazareth was off the beaten track and a sleepy enough place, Mary's experience ranged far beyond the confines of the little village. There is a bustle about her going 'with haste' to visit her cousin Elizabeth in the hill country of Judah. She travelled to Bethlehem for the census and after that to Egypt. Every year, Joseph and Mary went up to Jerusalem. She went to Capernaum with Jesus and his disciples (Jn.2:12) and was back again in Jerusalem for the fateful days of the Passion (Jn.19:25-27). The last we hear of her in the New Testament, she is in the Upper Room with the apostles, some other women and the brothers of Jesus united in prayer

(Acts 1.14)



Mary had the ability to take swift and decisive action. She went 'with haste' to visit Elizabeth. To some extent she joined her son in his ministry. She goes with the group to Capernaum and Jerusalem. The Gospel of Luke notes the thoughtful, reflective aspect of Mary. On two occasions, he

describes her mulling over the whole thing in her mind as she went about her life (Lk.2:19, 51). The Magnificat tells of her radical sense of justice and her ability to express trenchant social criticism (Lk.1:46-55).

It is not difficult to imagine her dressed in a tunic of undyed wool. Hands and fingers roughened from years of work in the fields. The whole village would help out in times of planting, weeding, gleaning, picking. Her face would be burnt brown, lined and worn by the sun and hard work.

Her face would have reflected many an emotion: tense with fear on the flight to Egypt, calm in repose, warm in love, cross with anxiety when they found the child in Jerusalem, her eyes bright as a button, alert, intelligent, flashing with humour or outrage.

Benedict Hegarty.

Pray the Angelus:



Praying the Angelus

Jean-Marie Delaperche

(1771 – 1843)

The Angelus Prayer

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with Thee;
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.
Hail Mary. . .

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary. . .

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. **Amen**

Pray the First Joyful Mystery – The Annunciation

The Archangel Gabriel “announces” to Mary that she shall conceive the Son of God

Pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary

- *The Annunciation:* The Archangel Gabriel "announces" to Mary that she shall conceive the Son of God.
- *The Visitation:* Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist.
- *The Nativity:* Jesus is born.
- *The Presentation:* Mary and Joseph "present" Jesus in the Temple where they meet Simeon.
- *The Finding in the Temple:* After losing Him, Mary and Joseph find young Jesus teaching the Rabbis in the Temple.

Something to think about:

What does Mary's "Yes" say to us?

The encounter between Mary and the Angel opens up the meaning of our own lives, by shedding light on our call to participate in God's loving plan.

Mary, in her selflessness, was open to the angel's visit. She recognized who was speaking. She listened, received and responded. In so doing, she shows us the way to respond to the Lord's call in our own lives. God initiates a relationship with each one of us - and we respond in surrendering freely to Him by accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Not just once, but daily. This dynamic, our free response to the Lord's invitations, leads to a dialogue, a conversation, a way of life.

Ideas for Outreach:

Try to spend some time thinking of Mary's confusion and the upheaval to her life because of the request to become the Mother of God. What is this saying to us now at this time? Do we know anyone who is going through a difficult time now? Decide on **ONE** thing that you can do to help them today.



Concluding Prayer

God, our heavenly Father, grant us the fortitude of Christ your Son to face the Covid-19 crisis with trust, patience and compassion.

Give us the grace of the Holy Spirit to free us from fear and look forward together to the future with healing and hope.

May the intercession of Saint Joseph, the guardian of Jesus, with Mary his mother and Mother of the Church, guide us through this time of peril, preserve us in peace, protect the vulnerable, health care workers and all who serve society, at home and abroad.

Fr Kevin O' Gorman SMA

Prayers of Intercession for the Feast of the Annunciation

God our Father, today we celebrate that Mary, your Mother and ours, said her “Yes” to your call to holiness.

1. We pray for all mothers who nurture their children in all sorts of circumstances. Give them courage and reward them for their patience and dedication.

Lord hear us.

2. We pray for all mothers who pass on the faith to their children and encourage them to grow in their love of you and their neighbours.

Lord hear us.

3. We pray for grandmothers and those who we consider our extended family – particularly at this time – when we are not able to be in contact with them. Let them be assured of our gratitude for their example and wisdom.

Lord hear us.

4. We pray for all who are dedicating themselves to the care of others at this time. Comfort and reward them for their unselfish service and dedication.

Lord hear us.

Almighty Father, on this the Feast of the Annunciation, we remember that the generosity of Mary enables us to share in your love and life, forever.

Amen.

Online resources for the Feast of the Annunciation

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Novena-in-Preparation-for-the-Feast-of-the-Annunciation.pdf>

<https://catholicsstrivingforholiness.com/2017/03/21/mar-25-annunciation-of-our-lord-solmenity-summary-vid-full-text/>