



ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT HOME EDITION

The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord - March 25, 2020



LIVING THE LITURGICAL YEAR



THE ANNUNCIATION BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

March 25 – The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

On March 25, nine months before Christmas, we celebrate one of the Church's most important feast days, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. Like all solemnities, this feast is one of formal celebration and great joy. The Annunciation is particularly special to many Catholics because it brings together three Catholic beliefs that are intrinsic to our faith.

The Incarnation of the Lord

It was always part of God's perfect plan to have the Second Person of the Trinity become human while also being fully divine. However, this did not actually take place until the angel Gabriel announced God's message to Mary and she gave her consent. When Gabriel announced this news, God was made man in the womb of Mary. We remember this when we pray the Nicene Creed, "For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man." The Incarnation is a pivotal moment in salvation history. It is the coming of our promised Savior – the beginning of the Life that saves us. The Incarnation is among the most important Mysteries of our Catholic faith, and it reveals God's great mercy.

Devotion to Mary

We honor Mary on the Annunciation because of her unique role in God's plan of salvation and her unprecedented obedience. In His omnipotence, God chose to rely on Mary for the completion of His plan. When Mary spoke her "Fiat," she said "yes" to God as a reversal of Adam and Eve's "no." We meditate on the Angel Gabriel's announcement and Mary's consent as the first of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

Catholic Social Teaching

In more recent times, Catholics have been looking at the way the Annunciation informs Catholic social teaching, particularly regarding the dignity of the human person. The Annunciation marks the conception of Jesus—that is, it recognizes the time that God became man as the moment when Jesus was conceived in Mary's womb. The importance we attach to this feast day is a good reminder of why we defend the dignity of life from conception.

Tell your children the story....

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

Luke 1:26-38 Revised Standard Version (RSV)

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "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.

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 father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" And 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 called holy, the Son of God.

And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Discuss: What news does Gabriel give Mary? What does Mary wonder at first? What sign does Gabriel give Mary to help her understand? How do you think Mary felt when Gabriel first appeared to her? What can we learn from Mary's response to the angel? How do you suppose Elizabeth felt about having a baby?

Look at the painting on page one and discuss the image. What do you see? What colors were used? Why do you think the artist shows Gabriel kneeling before Mary? Leonardo da Vinci was apprenticed in the workshop of Andrea del Verrocchio, who painted most of the work. Verrocchio left a note for twenty-year old Leonardo to finish the background and the angel. At that time Verrocchio used lead-based paint but Leonardo used different paint so centuries later when the painting was x-rayed, Verrocchio's work was evident, while Leonardo's angel was invisible. This is considered to be the first work of Leonardo da Vinci.

For a closer look, listen to Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 while looking at Leonardo da Vinci's painting in depth online. [YouTube da Vinci Annunciation/Beethoven Symphony No. 6](#)

Pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary as a family.

A Continual Feast *"the cheerful heart has a continual feast." Proverbs 15:15*

Waffles have been eaten generally on feast days in much of Europe, beginning in the twelfth century. Traditionally they were eaten on the Feast of the Annunciation and the crumbs were buried in the fields, with a prayer to Mary to bless the harvest of the farmers. Consider celebrating the Feast of the Annunciation by making waffles with your family.

Swedish Waffles

1 ¾ cups heavy cream, well chilled
1 1/3 cups flour
1-2 T sugar
Pinch of salt
½ cup cold water
3T melted sweet butter

Whip the cream until stiff.
Mix the flour, sugar, and salt in a bowl. Stir in the water to make a smooth batter. Fold the whipped cream into the batter. Stir in the melted butter. Heat the waffle iron (grease if needed). Fill the grid surface 2/3rds full of batter, bake until golden brown. Serve with whipped cream and raspberries.

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

SOMETIMES LIFE
IS LIKE WHEN
MARY HAD JESUS.

YOU DON'T REALLY
KNOW IF YOU CAN
HANDLE IT, BUT IF
GOD GAVE IT TO YOU,
YOU JUST GOTTA
TRUST THAT HE'LL
GIVE YOU A WAY.

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