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Seasoning the Seasons™

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The Annunciation of the Lord

The Annunciation of the Lord: March 25

On March 25, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. A "solemnity" is the highest ranking feast day we have in our Church.



Detail of Annunciation Scene from Sanctuary Mural
Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish
Cincinnati, Ohio

The word "annunciation" comes from the Latin word *annuntiare*, and it means the announcing, or announcement. What we are celebrating is the announcement of the birth of Jesus. You can find the story of the Annunciation in the Bible in Luke's Gospel. It is in Luke 1:26-38.

Mary was living in Nazareth, which is a town in Galilee in the modern day country of Israel. She was betrothed to Joseph.

One day the angel Gabriel visited Mary. Gabriel greeted Mary by saying, "Hail" and calling her "favored one" and telling her that the Lord was with her. Do you know that this is where we get the first words of the prayer, *Hail Mary*: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you"?

Mary was surprised to see the angel. But the angel Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid. Gabriel announced to Mary that she was going to have a baby boy and that she would name him Jesus. This is how Mary found out that she was going to be the mother of Jesus. And because Gabriel made this announcement to Mary, we call this the "annunciation."

The Archangel Gabriel told Mary that the baby she was going to have would be the Son of God. Gabriel also told Mary that Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, was going to

have a baby. Do you know who her baby was? Elizabeth's son was John the Baptist!

Mary was surprised to hear these announcements. But Gabriel told Mary that everything was possible with God. Mary trusted God and so she said yes, she would be the mother of Jesus! Once Mary said yes, Gabriel left.

Every year on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord we celebrate the Archangel Gabriel's announcement to Mary and that Mary trusted God and said yes!



Center Panel, Annunciation Stained Glass Window
Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish
Cincinnati, Ohio