

PRAYER TO THE VIRGIN

Rejoice! O Virgin Theotokos! Mary full of Grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you have born the Savior of our souls!

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

- ✧ The word Annunciation comes from the word announce. Look up the word announce in the dictionary and write its definition on a piece of paper.
- ✧ Read the Gospel lesson for the Feast: Luke 1:26-38. Why is the feast called the Annunciation? What is announced? Who announces the message? From whom does the message come?
- ✧ Talk about the choices we might make during an average day. Some choices are easy, others are not. Talk about some of the choices that God might want us to make? Is Mary free to make a choice to accept or not to accept what God wishes for her?
- ✧ Sing or recite the Troparion of the Feast before and/or after meals and at bedtime on the day of the Feast.
- ✧ Attend Church services on the eve of and/or the day of the Feast. Do you notice anything different in Church?



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COME CELEBRATE THE FEAST: THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD





THE ANNUNCIATION CELEBRATED ON MARCH 25

The “Incarnation,” it has been rightly said, “was not only the work of the Father, of His Power and His Spirit, it was also the work of the will and the faith of the Virgin.” On the feast of the Annunciation, therefore, Orthodoxy commemorates not only the divine initiative, it also commemorates the human response, whereby Mary freely accepted the vocation set before her. God always respects human liberty; and so, when He elected to become man, He desired to do so with the willing agreement of her whom He chose as His Mother. Mary’s answer to the angel was not a foregone conclusion. She could have refused; she was not a passive instrument but an active participant, with a free and positive part to play in God’s plan of salvation.

In the services of the Church, Mary’s doubts are set forth with the utmost directness; we see all her skepticism and embarrassment. This is done to make clear that she acted in full freedom. This feast is celebrated nine months before the feast of Christ’s birth.

THE ANNUNCIATION IN SCRIPTURE AND HYMNS

Epistle: Hebrews 2:11-18; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Vespers, “Lord I Call,” Sticheron 3

Then the Bodiless Angel replied: “When God so wishes the order of nature is overcome, and what is beyond man comes to pass, believe that my sayings are true, O All-Holy Lady, utterly without spot.” And she cried aloud: “Let it be to me according to your word, and I shall bear Him that is without flesh, Who shall borrow flesh from me, that through this mingling He may lead man up to his ancient glory.”

Matins, Magnification Hymn

With the Archangel’s voice we cry aloud to you, O Pure Virgin: Rejoice, O Full of Grace! For the Lord is with you.

Divine Liturgy, Troparion, Tone 4

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

Divine Liturgy, Kontakion, Tone 8

O victorious leader of triumphant hosts! We, your servants, delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos! As you possess invincible might set us free from every calamity so that we may sing: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride!

Divine Liturgy, Hymn to the Theotokos

O Earth, announce the Good Tidings of great joy: You heavens, praise the Glory of God! As you are a living temple of God, let no impure hand touch you, O Theotokos! But let the lips of all believers sing, constantly magnifying you in joy with the angelic salutation: Truly you are above all creatures, O Pure One!

