

Celebrating Mary's 'Yes'

Today we celebrate the feast of the Annunciation, that moment in history when Mary, a young Jewish peasant woman, opened herself to the Word of God. Through this gesture of welcome the human community was able to see, hear and touch, Emmanuel, God among us.

Each day we too are offered the same invitation – to allow God to continue to become incarnate in our body, our life. This enables God to continue God's mission of love in our world. As we sing in St Teresa's prayer: Christ has no body now but ours. Today, we are the body of Christ, and through us the work Jesus began continues throughout the ages. As we celebrate this feast let us keep this in mind.

Gathering Song:

SPEAK LORD

Speak Lord I am listening,
Let your Word be done unto me,
May it find a home in me

© 1991 Monica Brown & Emmaus Productions

<http://au.emmausproductions.com/>

"Used with permission from

Monica Brown & Emmaus Productions".

Narrator Gabriel Mary

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her,

'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.'

She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her,

'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestors and his reign will have no end.'

'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?'

'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.'

Short Pause

'I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me.'

And the angel left her.

Luke 1:26-38

Some time of silence to ponder the Word...

For two minutes break open the word with the person next to you.....

Ann Johnson shares a reflection on this text..

ANNUNCIATION

In those days when the people of Judea were oppressed
in the reign of King Herod
in the town of Nazareth
there was a woman named Miryam.

In prayer Miryam watched.
Eyes of her soul turned inward, she watched.
Ears of her spirit stretched out, she watched,
Watched for Yahweh in stillness.

In awe Miryam listened.
With the firm beat of her heart, she listened.
With the deep stroke of her breath, she listened.
Listened for Yahweh in stillness.



Jesus Mafa

In stillness Miryam reached out.
Mind alive, she reached out.
Memory reflecting, she reached out.
Inviting her God to inspire.

The Shadow streamed into her being.
Greeting the core of her soul.
Hearing, she stretched for the life source.
Embracing the quickening call.

“How is this? I know not!” she responded.
Stumbling in God’s desert of time.
“But you speak and all things come together.

I will
as you say
let it be.”

Her lifetime of shadowy knowing was
confirmed in the quieting joy.
Summoning cadences, ancient and deep,
echoed the call of God’s peace.

Miryam arose and went.
Holding the knowledge of change, went out.
Accepting the newness of challenge, went out.
Went out to begin the task.

Miryam embarked on the journey.
Her mind precise for the journey.
Her soul enflamed for the journey.
Journeyed to the arms of Elizabeth.

In warmth of those arms, she knew.
Ancient pathways opening before her, she knew
Words of her people streamed from her mouth, she knew.
Knew that her God lived within her.

Luke 1:26-38

Ann Johnson—Miryam of Nazareth



Jesus Mafa

As a way of attuning to how this poetry touched the group, share without comment a word, phrase or line which spoke to you..... make this a contemplative moment with a little pause after each contribution.....

HENRY TANNER – ANNUNCIATION

<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/600x315/8d/d7/56/8dd7562ce8f47cc811841791b6f8b853.jpg>

Many artists have captured this moment in time..... Below are some works of art Let one or two draw you into this encounter. What do you see, feel, hear...then have some time sharing your response in groups of three.



Mary Southard CSJ
Mary of the Annunciation and of Pentecost
www.MarySouthardArt.Org ;
and www.MinistryOfTheArts.Org

HAIL MARY: GENTLE WOMAN

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blest is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of death.
Amen.



Kien Be OSU

Refrain: Gentle woman, quiet light
morning star, so strong and bright,
gentle Mother, peaceful dove,
teach us wisdom; teach us love.

You were chosen by the Father;
you were chosen for the Son.
You were chosen from all women
and for woman, shining one.

Blessed are you among women,
blest in turn, all women, too.
Blessed they with peaceful spirits.
Blessed they with gentle hearts.

Carey Landry

Final Prayer

O God:

Enlarge my heart that it may be big enough to receive the greatness of your love.

Stretch my heart

that it may take into it all those who with me around the world believe in Jesus Christ.

Stretch it

that it may take into it all those who do not know him,
but who are my responsibility because I know him.

And stretch it

that it may take in all those who are not lovely in my eyes,
and whose hands I do not want to touch;
through Jesus Christ my Saviour, Amen

Prayer of an African Christian
- *Bread of Tomorrow*