

## ***The Feast of the Annunciation***

*On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Universal Church celebrates the actual Incarnation of Our Savior the Word made flesh in the womb of His mother, Mary.* The biblical account of the Annunciation is in the first chapter of the Gospel of Saint Luke, 26-56. Saint Luke describes the annunciation given by the angel Gabriel to Mary that she was to become the mother of the Incarnation of God.

Here is recorded the "angelic salutation" of Gabriel to Mary, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee,' and Mary's response to God's will, "Let it be done to me according to thy word." This "angelic salutation" is the origin of the "Hail Mary" prayer of the **Rosary** and the **Angelus** (the second part of the prayer comes from the words of salutation of Elizabeth to Mary at the **Visitation**).

The **Angelus**, a devotion that daily commemorates the Annunciation, consists of three Hail Marys separated by short versicles. It is said three times a day -- morning, noon and evening -- traditionally at the sound of a bell. The **Angelus** derives its name from the first word of the versicles, *Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae* (The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary). Mary's exultant hymn, the **Magnificat**, found in Luke 1:46-55, has been part of the Church's Liturgy of the Hours, at Vespers (evening prayer), and has been repeated nightly in churches, convents and monasteries for more than a thousand years.

The Church's celebration of the Annunciation is believed to date to the early 5th century, possibly originating at about the time of the Council of Ephesus (c 431). The Annunciation has always been celebrated on March 25, exactly nine months before Christmas Day.

### **Novena in preparation of the Annunciation**

*Prayed from March 17 to March 25, unless the feast is moved.*

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit + Amen.

I greet you, Ever-blessed Virgin, Mother of God, Throne of Grace, miracle of Almighty Power! I greet you, Sanctuary of the Most Holy Trinity and Queen of the Universe, Mother of Mercy and refuge of sinners!

Most loving Mother, attracted by your beauty and sweetness, and by your tender compassion, I confidently turn to you, miserable as I am, and beg of you to obtain for me from your dear Son the favor I request in this novena: ***(Mention your request)***.

Obtain for me also, Queen of heaven, the most lively contrition for my many sins and the grace to imitate closely those virtues which you practiced so faithfully, especially humility, purity and obedience. Above all, I beg you to be my Mother and Protectress, to receive me into the number of your devoted children, and to guide me from your high throne of glory.

Do not neglect my petitions, Mother of Mercy! Have pity on me, and do not abandon me during life or at the moment of my death. Amen.

In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit + Amen.