

ST IGNATIUS
& ST LUKE'S
22 March 2020



THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

From a Sermon on the Annunciation by St Proclus of Constantinople [+446]

....“All [says Saint Paul] have sinned, and come short the Glory of God” (*Rom 3:23*). Since sin subjects the sinner to the power of the devil, and the devil subjects him to death, then our condition did become extremely hapless: there was no sort of way to be delivered from death.

There were sent physicians, i.e. the prophets, but they could only the more clearly point out the malady. What did they do? When they saw that the illness was beyond human skill, they summoned from Heaven the Physician; one of them said “Lord, bend the heavens, and come down” (*Ps 144:5*); others cried out...: “restore Thine power, and come yet to save us” (*Ps 80:3*).

...That One, Who by nature is Lord, did not disdain human nature, enslaved by the sinister power of the devil; the merciful God would not accede for it to be forever under the power of the devil; the Ever-Existing One came and gave in ransom His Blood. For the redemption of the race of man from death He gave up His Body, which He had accepted of the Virgin; He delivered the world from the curse of the law, annihilating death by His death. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law” exclaims Saint Paul (*Gal 3:13*).

Thus know that our Redeemer is not simply a mere man, since all the human race was enslaved to sin. But He likewise is not God only, non-partaking of human nature. He had a body, since if He had not clothed Himself in me, He then likewise should not have saved me. But, having settled within the womb of the Virgin, He clothed Himself in my fate, and within this womb He perfected a miraculous change: He bestowed the Spirit and received a body, That One only indeed [dwelling] with the Virgin and [born] of the Virgin. And so, Who is He, made manifest to us? The Prophet David doth point it out for thee in these words: “Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord” (*Ps 118:26*).

But tell us even more clearly, O prophet, Who is He? The Lord is the God of Hosts, says the prophet: “God is the Lord, and hath revealed Himself unto us” (*Ps 118:27*). “The Word was made flesh” (*Jn 1:14*): there were co-united the two natures, and the union remained without mingling.

He came to save, but had also to suffer....He wore the crown of thorns and destroyed the judgement to suffering from the thorns....Upon Him the Seraphim dared not to gaze, and at the same time Pilate pronounced sentence upon Him. He is That One and Same, Whom the servant did smite and before whom did tremble all creation. He was nailed to the Cross and ascended to the Throne of Glory—He was placed in the tomb and He stretched out the heavens like a skin (*Ps 104:2*)—He was numbered amidst the dead and He emptied hell; here upon the earth, they cursed at Him as a transgressor—there in Heaven, they exclaimed Him glory as the All-Holy.

What an incomprehensible mystery! I see the miracles, and

I confess, that He is God; I see the sufferings, and I cannot deny that He is Man. Emmanuel opened up the doors of nature, as man, and preserved unharmed the seal of virginity, as God: He emerged from the womb thus as He entered through the announcing; the same wondrously was He both born and conceived: without passion He entered, and without impairment He emerged, as concerning this doth say the Prophet Ezekiel: “He returned me back the way of the gates of the outer sanctuaries, looking upon the east: and these had been shut. And saith the Lord to me: son of man, these gates shalt be closed, and not open, and no one go through them: for the Lord God of Israel, He Only, shalt enter and come forth, and they wilt be shut” (*Ez 44:1-2*). Here it clearly indicates the Holy Virgin and Mother of God Mary.

Let cease all contention, and let the Holy Scripture enlighten our reason, so that we too receive the Heavenly Kingdom unto all eternity. Amen.

Since the Church's beginnings in Jerusalem, certain days have been set aside for commemoration of sacred events and holy people. The weekly celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord on Sundays was the earliest of these. Both Pentecost and Easter were observed by the Pre-Nicene Church. The Post-Nicene Church dedicated feast days for the Nativity of Christ, His Baptism, and other important feasts. The feast days of martyrs developed next.

But the Feast of the Annunciation is among the oldest Christian feasts. It originally began as the Feast of the Conception of Christ. However, with the ever-growing devotion to His Mother, and the increasing consciousness of her role in God's plan of salvation, the feast soon took on a distinctly Marian character. The earliest records of this celebration are found in homilies written by Patriarch Proclus of Constantinople and Peter Chrysologos, both from the middle of the 5th century. Even at that early date, the feast was celebrated on March 25, exactly nine months before Christmas. [It is interesting to note that in the early third century, Tertullian (+220) states definitely that Our Savior died on the cross on March 25. This is confirmed by St. Hippolytus of Rome (+235) as well as St. Augustine (+431) in his Treatise De Trinitate (iv, 5) which states that, “Jesus died on the cross on March 25, the same day of the year as that on which He was conceived.”]

The hymns of the Annunciation show Mary's role as the New Eve, defined by the Church Fathers. Eve's disobedience brought death to man. Mary's obedience brought man life and salvation.

The significance of this Christian feast on Western culture is made clear from the fact that New Years Day used to be celebrated on March 25. This was the case in England (where the feast is called Ladyday) until as late as 1752.

Another remnant of the historic universality of Christianity in the world is the universal use of BC (before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini – The Year of Our Lord) to denote periods of time in history. Although there has been an attempt in some circles to change 'BC' to 'BCE' (before the common era), AD to CE (common era), and although it is true that the religious significance of our system of dating has been effectively obliterated, nevertheless, Christians and non-Christians alike consent to the birth of Christ as the “fulcrum” of the dating the events of human history.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

All who are suffering or sick and all caregivers who minister to the sick: Amy Howard, Mary Morehead and family, Curtis Bailey, Leondre Massey, Sister Constance Ward, George Cochran, Mark Anthony Turner, Rachel Fisher, Patricia Ransom, Jacqueline Chancio, Beverly A. Woods, Kerrianna Prather, Victoria P.; M.M., R.M., K.M., C.M., C.A., E.D., E.G., W.B., J.M., and J.G.

*Please call or email the office to add a name to the prayer list. **Before calling, please be sure you have spoken to the person [or a member of his family] about adding the name—we do not want to inadvertently disregard someone's desire for privacy.***

Names of those who are sick or suffering will be kept on the list for one month; to keep a name on the list for longer, you must email the parish office.

MASS READINGS THIS WEEK

22 March *Fourth Sunday in Lent*

1 Samuel 16: 1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Psalm 23: 1-6;

Ephesians 5: 8-14; John 9: 1-41

23 March *Turibius of Mogrovejo, Bishop*

Isaiah 65: 17-21; Psalm 30: 2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b; John 4: 43-54

24 March *Lenten Feria*

Ezekiel 47: 1-9, 12; Psalm 46: 2-3, 5-6, 8-9; John 5: 1-16

25 March THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Isaiah 7: 10-14, 8: 10; Psalm 40: 7-11;

Hebrews 10: 4-10; Luke 1: 26-38

26 March *Lenten Feria*

Exodus 32: 7-14; Psalm 106: 19-23; John 5: 31-47

27 March *Lenten Feria*

Wisdom 2: 1a, 12-22; Psalm 34: 17-21, 23; John 7: 1-2, 10, 25-30

28 March *Lenten Feria*

Jeremiah 11: 18-20; Psalm 7: 2-3, 9b-12; John 7: 40-53

29 March *Fifth Sunday in Lent*

Ezekiel 37: 12-14; Psalm 130: 1-8;

Romans 8: 8-11; John 11: 1-45

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, 21 March

for the forgotten souls in our graveyard +

Sunday, 22 March

Fourth Sunday in Lent, called Laetare

Pro populo

Monday, 23 March

Turibius de Mogrovejo, Bishop

Russell and Anne White

Tuesday, 24 March

Tuesday in the Fourth Week of Lent

James Cardinal Gibbons +

Wednesday, 25 March

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

Jose and Guadalupe Manlapaz + [Susie Martinez]

Thursday, 26 March

Thursday in the Fourth Week of Lent

Jerry Ryan + [Chris and Deborah Ruddy]

Friday, 27 March

Friday in the Fourth Week of Lent

Leslie Lee + [Lester Lee]

Saturday, 28 March

Doris Pettko + [Rosemary Coller]

Sunday, 29 March

Fifth Sunday in Lent, called Passion Sunday

Pro populo

Fr. Vidal will be saying private masses daily until the coronavirus protocols permit public celebration once more. Mass intentions will therefore be covered.

St. Ignatius Finance Council

Florian Hocke - *Co-Chair*

Jackie Chancio

Deacon Clark Glenn

Joseph Somerville

Clifford Woods

office@saint-ig.org • SAINT-IG.ORG

301-567-4740

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CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. John Vidal

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Nicole Crawford • Mario Enzler

David Lewis • Franco Madan

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Karen King - *ex officio*

stlukesdordinariate@gmail.com

STLUKESORDINARIATE.COM

202-999-9934

Saint Luké's at
IGNATIUS CHURCH