

*The celebration of the Annunciation* offers an opportunity to reflect on a great mystery in the life of the Church: the ‘yes’ that Mary proclaims to the invitation God offers through the angel Gabriel. Many times we ponder the challenges that the angel must have presented to the Blessed Mother: Can you really be speaking to me? How will this come about? What will my family say? What about the rest of the community? I’m not married, what place will there be for me and my child? How is it that God should pay any attention to me? All these and many more questions would have gone through her mind at that time, and we know that there is supreme trust in God in the ‘yes’ that she proclaims. Questions of life are always of paramount importance in the life of faithful people of every tradition. This year, the celebration of the Annunciation comes at a time when the future seems so obscured by the challenges that we face, and yet, it is Mary who offers a compassionate proclamation ‘yes’ for us all. We do not trust blindly, for we know how God has acted in the past, and how God continues to act in our midst. Our ‘yesses’ are proclamations of willingness to step forward in faith, knowing that our God is with us. Our concern for life at this time also includes following the instructions to stay at home and to stay safe. Many of us might see ourselves as being hale and hearty and able to recover from any virus we encounter, but that does not mean that the people we may encounter are as strong as we are. For their sake, for their lives, we will remain at home and ponder the ‘yes’ that Mary proclaims, and the ‘yesses’ that each of us are living out.