

Got My List, Double-Checked It, and Checked It Again for Christ!

Nine months from Monday, March 25, it will be Christmas Day. The twentieth-fifth day of March is known in Christendom as the Annunciation of Our Lord. Those that put together the church calendar wisely direct our eyes again and again to the Savior, who comes to earth in human flesh and without sin to save His people from their sins.

I think we're all familiar with the biblical account of the Annunciation of Our Lord. The Evangelist Luke writes, "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you! ... You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ... And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her" (Luke 1:26–38, ESV).

The long-awaited day which the prophets pointed and spoken about in the OT Bible has now arrived. And so, the angel Gabriel was sent from the glories of heaven to announce to Mary, a young virgin, betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, and living in the town of Nazareth, that she will bear the promised Christ.

On hearing these words, Mary simply believes the miracle promised by God. She takes His word at face value. But she also knows the facts of life; she's not promiscuous. She and her betrothed are godly believers; they're not living together outside of marriage or doing things good Jewish girls and boys are not to do. In fact, they cannot even be alone together without a chaperone being present with them.

And so, Mary asks a question of clarification, saying: "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God" (Luke 1:34-35, ESV).

With her question answered, Mary replies: "'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me

according to your word.' And the angel departed from her" (Luke 1:38, ESV).

In the fullness of time, the Word becomes flesh. The long-awaited Promised Christ, the divine Son of the Most High, enters the world in lowliness and humbleness, via the womb of a virgin. At the Annunciation, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity is conceived. He becomes a human zygote, an embryo, and a fetus *for you!* He is conceived in the womb of a virgin, born of the virgin Mary, and born under the Law *for you* and *for all those* who are under the law.

The Word became a real human being and grew in favor with God and man *for you*. And, then, He went the way of the cross, shedding His holy precious blood and dying on a tree to reconcile *you* to His Father. He did this all *for you!* He did it all for *your children* and for *me*, too. Our Christmas Lord, the Word made flesh, is the perfect Savior. He is called Immanuel and He is with us always, even unto the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).

When the Annunciation of Our Lord falls on a Sunday during Lent, we normally do not observe it since the Season of Lent holds priority on the church calendar. But in our devotions, the services of bigger churches that are held throughout the week, and even newsletter articles like this one, we

pause to remember, even in the season of Lent, the Annunciation of Our Lord. It is an important date on the calendar and for our life together at St. Paul.

As the months tick by (and they go by so quickly), you and your family will begin to make a Christmas list, you'll double-check it, and check it again, but make sure in 2019 that Christ, the Incarnate Word, has a special spot in all your activities. Please, don't forget Him in your busyness or leave Him off your lists.

Let us pray: O Lord, as we have known the incarnation of Your Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of the angel to the virgin Mary, so by the message of His cross and passion bring us to the glory of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

— Pastor Cliff Adair

