

07 April 2024

## WORD OF THE WEEK

### Annunciation \ə-,nən-sē-ā-shən\

From Latin, “to bring news,” the angelic proclamation to Mary of Nazareth that she would be the mother of Jesus. Mary’s submission to this divine plan is simply given: “Let it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Her “yes” is often referred to as Mary’s *fiat* (Latin for “let it be done”).

*Pronunciation:* <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-annunciation>

### CONTEXT

The mystery of the **Annunciation** reveals the depth of God’s love for us, and his desire to be in relationship with us.

—Henri Nouwen

The **Annunciation** is the revelation of the mystery of the Incarnation at the very beginning of its fulfillment.

—Pope John Paul II, Redemptoris Mater

The importance of the **Annunciation** is underscored by the fact that this is the first mystery of the Rosary and is celebrated by the Angelus as well.

—David Bryan

### WHY IT MATTERS

Unlike many saving acts that are unilaterally achieved by the divine will, in the **Annunciation** a woman is invited to participate in the saving event that has consequences for all people and all time. Mary’s yes is universal and limitless. At the **Annunciation**, Mary perfectly consents to God’s will, then bears the Son, and is filled with the Spirit, which, as theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar notes, is wholly trinitarian.

From Pope Paul VI’s *Marialis Cultus* (“Devotion to Mary”): [The **Annunciation** observance] was and is a joint one of Christ and of the Blessed Virgin: of the Word, who becomes Son of Mary, and of the Virgin, who becomes Mother of God.

### RELATED WORDS

Hyperdulia | Assumption | Immaculate Conception

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

### What do I need to know about Mary?

There is the biblical Mary of Nazareth, who fulfills Isaiah’s Emmanuel prophecy by giving birth to a child who is “God with us.” Her Magnificat canticle foreshadows Jesus’ proclamation that the mighty will be brought down while the poor are lifted up. Mary plays other noteworthy roles: advocating for a miracle at Cana, being present at the cross, and participating in the Spirit’s reception at Pentecost. Finally, as Mary is the first disciple of her son, she is the ideal model for all of us.

The church teaches four doctrines about Mary. Two declarations declare her a virgin as well as the Mother of God. Two later doctrines teach that Mary was conceived immaculately (sinless) and that, at the point of death, was assumed body and soul to heaven.

Devotionally, Mary plays a large role in popular piety. Her icon has been venerated since the early centuries in the East. By means of the Rosary, litanies, and pilgrimage, people of many lands feel a special closeness to the mother of Jesus who is mother to all.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-about-Mary>

## REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD (APRIL 8)

### The three best words

Mary is the mother of the church and the model of all Christians. At the message of an angel, she believed beyond all reason and offered her life in service of God’s plan. Her response, “let it be,” is the answer of every disciple who trusts in God’s word to make all things new. In the season of Lent, God invites us to believe that we, too, are called to that service.

READINGS: Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38 (545 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/040824.cfm>). “*May it be done to me according to your word.*”

### FAITH IN ACTION

Though we are sinners, we must live in hope of God’s forgiveness and trust that God will work through us to bring about the fulfillment of an eternal plan to save the world.