Annunciation of the Lord, Primary - RCLB Lectionary

Primary Session
Luke 1:26-38

Opening Prayer
Let us Pray.
Dear God,
You gave us Mary as a good example. Help us be like her. Help us say "yes." Help us do what we know is right even when it is hard. Thank you for sending Jesus to help us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Opening Life Reflection
Draw a face of each person gathered. Have everyone describe how the person in the drawing has said "yes" to God. Think of specific ways and name them. When everyone has shared their ideas, make the faces into a mobile and hang it from a prominent spot where you will remember to thank God for each person.

Listening to the Word of God
See how the angel, Gabriel, let Mary know her part in God's plan.

Luke 1:26-38
Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters
• What news does Gabriel give Mary?
• What does Mary wonder at first?
• What sign does Gabriel give Mary to help her understand?

Scripture Background
Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the gospel using the Catechist Background section.

In Luke's account of Gabriel's announcement, Mary is the central figure. Gabriel tells her that she is favored by God and will have a significant role in God's plan to enter human history. Gabriel tells Mary that she will bear a child she is to name Jesus. Great things will happen through this child of Mary's. At first Mary wonders how the angel's words can be true. She mentions to him that she is not yet married. The angel calms her by saying that the child will be conceived through the Holy Spirit. Mary probably still wonders, but she loves God enough to accept what the angel says. To back up his words with a sign, Gabriel tells Mary that her cousin, Elizabeth who is by now quite elderly and thought never to be able to have children, is also going to have a baby.

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Questions for Deeper Reflection
• How do you think Mary felt when Gabriel first appeared to her?
• What can we learn from Mary in her response to the angel?
• How do you suppose Elizabeth felt about having a baby?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters
Gabriel's Announcement
Catholics believe that God came into the world for a reason. In the human form of Jesus, God came down from heaven so that we might be saved from our sins. God wants us to live in heaven forever. A long time ago, the prophets said that God would come into the world through a virgin. To announce this great plan, God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary explaining that she would be the mother of the Messiah. Mary probably did not completely understand everything the angel told her, but she immediately agreed to God's plan for her, whatever that might be. Through the Holy Spirit, she conceived Jesus and the Church sets March 25, nine months prior to Christmas, as the day we celebrate this occasion.

• How does the Old Testament prepare us for the annunciation?
• Why did God want to send Jesus in the first place?
• What was Mary's role in God's plan?

Sacrament Connection
Eucharist
God came down from heaven in the form of Jesus to be with humankind. It is in the Eucharist that we are one with Christ. Christ himself is in the Eucharist and when we participate in this sacrament, we receive Christ and God's saving action. In this sacrament we are one with Christ and with all of God's people. In the documents of the Second Vatican Council the Eucharist is described as the "source and summit of the Christian life," and our entire faith is summarized in the sacrament. We believe that God is with us and that we unite ourselves with God through Jesus. When we participate in the Sacrament of Eucharist, we prepare ourselves for the heavenly banquet and anticipate eternal life with God in heaven.

The Gospel in Life
How can you be like the angel Gabriel and bring Jesus into someone's life this week? Think of one action you can take to reflect God's love for someone who may be feeling unloved just now.