



a Kendall Hunt Company

Annunciation of the Lord, Intermediate

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Sun, 06/05/2016 - 20:00

Intermediate Session

Isaiah 7:10-14

Luke 1:26-38

Opening Prayer

Let us Pray.

God our Father, you give us loving parents who care for us in the best way they can. Thank you for giving us life through them. Guide them as they show us how to follow your ways, and give us patience and humility to respect them and to listen. Help us be open to all that you desire for us. Through your Son, Jesus, we pray, Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Pray the Stations of the Cross. As you pray each station, take the time to think about how someone said "yes" or how the station shows you a way to say "yes." How are you like the people you encounter on the Way of the Cross? How are they a model for you?

- What are some things that make it hard to say "yes" to God?
- In what ways does God ask us to obey?
- How can Mary and others help us do what is difficult?

Allow time to share reflections from the stations and these questions.

Listening to the Word of God

Listen as God's plan to enter the world is revealed.

Read Isaiah 7:10-14, 8-10

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why is it significant that Ahaz was proud and arrogant?
- Why does God still want to help Ahaz and show him a sign of love?
- What does God promise for the future?

Listen as the angel, Gabriel, tells Mary her part in God's plan to enter the world.

Luke 1:26-38

Allow for silence.

- What is Gabriel's announcement?
- What is Mary's first response to Gabriel's message?
- What sign does Gabriel give Mary to confirm the truth of the message?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

It would seem that King Ahaz and his troops were doomed. His enemies were fast approaching and



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he saw only two choices: surrender to the invading army or call on one of his other enemies (it didn't seem that he had many friends!) for help. Isaiah counseled him to do neither, but to wait for God's help. Ahaz didn't have much faith in God, so he decided to call on his enemy for help. But Isaiah said God would send a sign anyway. A woman would bear a child who will come to know the difference between wrong and right. Before this time, however, the child will only know devastation. And because Ahaz did not wait for God but rather called on his enemies, the Assyrians, the devastation of the land was put in motion.

In a predictable format, Luke tells the story of God's incarnation, or coming into the world. God sends a messenger, Gabriel, to Mary announcing that she will bear a child that she is to name Jesus. Great things will happen through this child of Mary's. This news confuses Mary somewhat and she mentions that she is not yet married. The angel calms her by saying that the child will be conceived through the Holy Spirit. This still probably doesn't make much sense to Mary, 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 pregnant.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What do you think was the hardest part of Gabriel's message for Mary to understand?
- Imagine that you are Mary. What does it mean to you that you will give birth to God's Son?
- How do you suppose Elizabeth felt about her pregnancy?

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

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Gabriel's Announcement

Central to our faith is the fact that God entered human history. In the human form of Jesus, God came down from heaven so that we might be reconciled with God. Foretold by the prophets, God came humbly 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 knew the scriptures and understood that the Messiah was to be divine and prophetic and come from the house of David. She probably did not fully understand until Pentecost that she was indeed the Mother of God, but nevertheless, 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?
- What was God's goal in sending Jesus?
- 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.

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