



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Annunciation of the Lord, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



### Junior High Session

Isaiah 7:10-14

Luke 1:26-38

### Opening Prayer

Let us Pray.

Loving God, You called Mary, a humble servant, to be Jesus' mother. Help us keep in mind, too, that we are truly humble. Remind us to keep Mary before us as a model of obedience. Like her, help us follow your ways even when it would be easier to do things our own way. As Mary did so willingly, let us welcome you into our lives each day. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

### Opening Life Reflection

Find a way to say "yes" to God in the ordinary. Find some common articles such as a pen, a pan, a dishcloth, a can of food. Use the pen to remind you of something that needs to be written that is a "yes" to God. It might be letter to someone who misses you or a letter of encouragement to someone who struggles. Use the pan to make a treat for a child. A dishcloth can be used to help someone (like doing the dishes for your mother, or helping a neighbor clean up around the house). A can of food might remind you of someone who is hungry. Think of a way to help feed that person.

Allow time to share ideas. Discuss other items and what will be done with them to show that we also say "yes" to God.

### Listening to the Word of God

Listen as God foretells the plan for God's entry into human history.

Read Isaiah 7:10-14, 8-10

Allow for silence.

### Scripture Discussion Starters

- How is Ahaz like other people you know or know about?
- Why does God persist in showing love to Ahaz and those like him?
- How did God take the initiative with Ahaz? How does God take the initiative with you?

Luke shows us Gabriel's role as he explains to Mary her part in salvation.

Luke 1:26-38

Allow for silence.



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- How does Gabriel explain God's plan to Mary?
- How did God rearrange the plans Mary had for her life?
- What answer did Mary give Gabriel?

### **Scripture Background**

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

King Ahaz's enemies were approaching from all around and he had to make a choice. He could either surrender or call on other troops to help. The problem was, he didn't really trust the other troops. God's messenger, Isaiah, told Ahaz not to choose either plan, but to trust in God. Ahaz didn't really think God would help so he ignored Isaiah. He went with option B: ask his enemies for help. God did not give up, and Isaiah said that God would send a sign anyway. A woman would bear a child who would come to know the difference between wrong and right. Before that could happen, though, the child would first only know devastation. Because Ahaz did not wait for God but rather called on his enemies, the Assyrians, the devastation of the land was put in motion.

Many years later, Gabriel announces a variation on Isaiah's words. Another woman will bear another child and through this child who knows the difference between wrong and right, the world will be saved. At first Mary can't understand how this can be since she is not yet married to Joseph, but the angel explains that through the Holy Spirit, she will conceive the Son of God. None of this could have happened if Mary had not said "yes" to God. Even though she didn't completely understand, she agreed to serve her part in God's plan. As a sign of God's affirmation, Mary learned that her cousin Elizabeth was also pregnant. This, too, was amazing to Mary since Elizabeth was old and thought never to be able to have children.

### **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- What would the words "God has found favor in you" mean if Gabriel had said these words to you?
- What kinds of things do you think went through Mary's mind in the days between Gabriel's visit and the birth of Jesus?
- What gave Mary hope?

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

### **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

#### **Gabriel's Announcement**

The center of our Catholic faith rests in the belief that God entered human history. As a human being, known as Jesus, God came down from heaven. God wanted us to always be with him and Jesus came to save us so we could return to God. Many years before Jesus, the prophets foretold that God would come humbly into the world through a virgin. When the

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time came, God sent the angel Gabriel to announce this great plan. Gabriel explained to Mary 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. It is possible that she 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 did the prophets in the Hebrew scriptures prepare us for Gabriel's news?
- Why was it necessary for God to send Jesus to us?
- How did Mary figure into God's plan?

## **Sacrament Connection**

### **Eucharist**

God came down from heaven in the human form of Jesus to be with us. We are one with Christ in the Eucharist. Christ himself is in the Eucharist and when we participate in this sacrament, we receive Christ and God's saving action. Not only are we one with Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist, but we are united 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.