

ANNUCIATION – March 2006

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Today we celebrate the glorious 'Yes', of Mary, the gate from which the Saviour entered to lift man from the depths, from the oppression of the burden of sin and allowed us to become the children of God. The gate closed shut and sealed by Eve is again opened in new way through Mary's 'Yes'; she is the gate through which grace becomes incarnate in flesh and blood, the only Son of God becomes man, *et incarnatus est*.

Our Lady truly is “full of grace”- because it is in her that the Incarnation of The Word, the union of the Son of God with human nature, is fulfilled. Today is a feast of the new Eve, the obedient and faithful virgin, who with her generous “be it unto me according to thy word” became the Mother of God and the true Mother of the living. By receiving into her womb the one Mediator, she became the true Ark of the Covenant and Temple of God.

Mary, of course, was preserved from the inheritance of original sin. Yet it was through her obedience to the Divine Will, through her willingness to accept God’s intentions, through her free consent, that Mary allowed God’s plan for our redemption and salvation to proceed. The Annunciation is the beginning of a new earth and a new creation. Mary, through her free 'Yes', brought redemption, adoption and true freedom into the world. She helps us today to be obedient to what we are called to do, and to bring forth God’s son into this world through our words and deeds.

Through her divine election and perfect obedience, Mary truly is the mother of all believers. Each and every one of us has recourse to her kindness, purity and grace, in our needs and aspirations, in our loneliness and our common endeavours, in our joys and in our sorrows. We can constantly experience the gift of her goodness and the unfailing love which she pours out from the depths of her heart. Every continent and every culture testifies to the power of her perfect prayer and benevolent love. This love is made possible through this most intimate union with God, through which her soul was totally pervaded by Him, enabling her to not only drink from the fountain of God’s love, but to herself become a fountain of living water. Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, shows us what love is, where it comes from, and how it is constantly renewed.

Like Mary, our whole Christian life consists in, as St Paul puts it, 'bringing Christ to birth'. So on this day when the angelic salutation chimes from our churches let us stop and let us ask the Virgin to obtain for us that faith which brings Christ to life within us, that 'Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith' and to obtain for us that love which makes us truly free and allows us to live as the children of God.