



25 MARCH

ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD



Mary, daughter of her people, Anawin - poor of Yahweh - full of hope.

Mary is a young girl living in Galilee, a region of Palestine politically subject to the Roman Empire. Throughout her childhood and adolescence, she had witnessed the often bloody revolts of the Zealots and other independence groups seeking to liberate their people. Like many young people in her village, she waited for the coming of a Messiah and liberator. In this beautiful region of Galilee, Mary also witnessed and shared in the continuing mercy of Yahweh, the God of her parents, Anna and Joachim, and of her ancestors: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

In her daily life, in her little town of Nazareth, she constantly contemplated God's action in favour of the humble and simple. In this way, she, her parents and those close to her, faithful to the style of Anawin (Yahweh's rest), live with the confidence that God's promises will be fulfilled, a God who will fill with true peace hearts that thirst for living water.

Feet on the ground and eyes to heaven.

Every year on Shabbat, the Jewish Passover, the deeds and promises of Yahweh are relived, and this desire for a just and merciful God grows in young Mary. Although her feet were firmly planted on the ground, her eyes were also fixed on heaven. Her constant and grateful contemplation of

God was nourished by the collective memory of her people, the Anawin, the poor of Yahweh, who told of God's past exploits and taught Mary to discover the theophanies, the presence of God in her daily life, in the events of each day, in her encounters with people.

Joseph is one of these people, a just and hardworking young man who shares the same ideals and desires for God, the same vision of the Kingdom. With him, who will be her companion for life, she will experience happy moments and difficult trials.

Recognition and acceptance of a messenger of the same God.

And because she was so used to contemplating and recognising the signs of God in her life, it was not difficult for Mary to recognise the messenger who one day came to greet her and propose something great. I greet you, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with you. Although she recognised the angel, she was troubled because she did not fully understand the meaning of his greeting. The messenger of God then explained his proposal: "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus..."

The aim is to propose to Mary that she be the mother of Jesus, the Son of the Most High... Mary again asked questions because, although she was very young, she was not naive. She wanted clarity and more information so that she could think things through. How will it work if I'm a virgin? The Messenger of God answered Mary's concerns and questions with great clarity. The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the holy one who will be born of you will be called Son of God".

It is here, at this decisive moment in Mary's history and in our history, that desires meet: the deep desire in God's heart - to save humanity - and the deep desire in Mary's heart - to save humanity, and not just any humanity, but wounded humanity.

A decisive moment in history, in our history...

It is at this moment that time stands still, breathing stops and the eyes of humanity are turned towards the expectation and excitement of the answer.

What will Mary say to God? An answer awaited not only by all past, present and future generations, but also by all the creatures of the universe.

Mary, the young bride of Joseph, the daughter of Joachim and Anna, the descendant of the remnant of Yahweh, the humble young woman, supportive and proactive in the situations of her people, joyful in all the feasts and community celebrations of her people, sincere and honest in her actions, remembers the immense mercy of God for his people, and with deep humility and loving gratitude she says to the God of life and salvation:

"Let it be done to me according to his Word"...
And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

- *And every time we eat the Body and drink the Blood of Christ, we are also nourished by Mary, the Mother, the One who strengthens, soothes and sustains?*
- *What did it mean for Mary to give her YES?*
- *What does Mary's yes mean for us?*
- *What does the YES we have given to Jesus, the Eternal Wisdom made flesh, mean for us?*



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