

The Annunciation of our Lord, A ✕ D 2011

Luke 1:26-38

In the Name of the Father and of the ✕ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

1 The angel spoke into the ear of the woman. The words seemed sweet and comforting, but his breath smelled of death. "You will certainly not die. The Lord knows that when you eat of it, you will be like Him, knowing the difference between good and evil." With these words, the angel who had rebelled against the Creator enticed the most cherished creatures into the same rebellion. "Be like God." When Eve believed the wicked angel, she conceived sin. He sowed the seed of disobedience and it bore fruit as Eve succumbed to the angel's temptation. She ate the fruit of disobedience and gave some to her husband who ate as well.

2 Because of her rebellion, Eve, the mother of all humanity, would give birth to humanity in excruciating pain. Because of his rebellion, Adam would labor in pain and fear of death just to get ordinary dirt to submit to him. Every child of Eve is born with her inability to withstand temptation. Every son of Eve is rebellious against his mother. Every daughter of Eve will succumb to the temptation to be her own god.

3 But the Lord did not leave His beloved creatures to be their own gods. Despite their rebellion, the Lord promised deliverance for Adam and Eve. The head of the rebellious angel who wanted to claim these, the treasures of the Lord's creation, would be crushed by a distant offspring of Eve.

4 So another angel appeared to the woman. He spoke to her the word of life. "Do not be afraid, Mary." The evil angel had to hide himself in the form of an animal. But the angel Gabriel, sent by the Lord himself, appeared displaying the glory of the Lord. "Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High." The word from the angel Gabriel spoke the seed of deliverance to mankind into the ear of Mary. When she believed him, she conceived the Savior of the world.

5 "Be like God," the angel had whispered to Eve. "Be the bearer of God," the angel proclaimed to Mary. Where through Eve the devil sought to turn humanity against God, now through the Second Eve, Mary, the Lord makes Himself one with humanity. In the womb of this virgin girl, engaged to be married but not ever having had a sexual encounter with a man, God miraculously and eternally joined Himself to human flesh. In Mary's virgin womb, the Son of God found a humble home.

6 Do not be like faithless Eve, eager to give in to the devil's trickery. Do not be like spineless Adam, unwilling to deter his wife from sinning. Do not be a child of Eve, but be a child of Mary.

7 The Lord is faithful to His promises. He promised a deliverer from Eve's seed. This child, nine months from Gabriel's visit, nine months after the beginning of His Incarnation, would be born. And thirty-three years after that, He would die on the cross. His death would be the crushing blow to the serpent's head, the stinging defeat dealt to the devil. But even now, even

at Gabriel's word, the baby spoken into her womb by the Holy Spirit was the fulfillment of the promise.

8 By Christ's death and resurrection, you become children of Mary, too, born miraculously like your brother Jesus. She becomes the picture of the Lord's holy Church, the mother of the new creation, not by her own virtue, but by the virtue of the Holy One of God, Jesus Christ, conceived in her virgin womb. She, His Church, continues to bear children miraculously; Her womb is the font of Holy Baptism. You are a child, born not of the flesh, but of water and the Spirit. And She, as a tender, caring mother, continues to nurse her children. You are fed from her breast at this altar, being fed with the Lord's Body and Blood. Your sins are thus forgiven and you receive new life from your Lord, through your Mother, the Church.

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Pastor Jeff Hemmer