

MARCH 25 - ANNUNCIATION

SUPPLEMENT FOR GREAT COMPLINE

TROPARION OF THE ANNUNCIATION

tone 4 - Anthology for Worship, page 821

Ukrainian:

Днесь спасення нашого **начало*** і від віку таїнства **явління:*** Син Божий сином Діви стається* і Гавриїл благодать **благовістує.*** Тому й ми з ним до Богородиці **закличмо:*** Радуйся, **Благодатная, *** Господь з тобою.

English:

Today is the beginning of our **salvation,*** and the unfolding of the eternal **mystery;*** the Son of God becomes the **Virgin's Son,*** and Gabriel brings the good **tidings of grace.*** With him let us also cry to the **Mother of God:*** Rejoice, O **Full of grace!*** The Lord is **with you.**

KONDAKION OF THE ANNUNCIATION

tone 8 "Though You descended":

To You, O Mother of **God,*** the invincible **leader,*** we, your servants, ascribe these **victory hymns*** in thanksgiving for our deliverance from **evil.*** With your invincible power free us from all **dangers *** that we may cry **out to you: *** Rejoice, O Bride **Unwedded!**

APOSTICHA OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Tone 4

In the sixth month the Archangel was sent to the pure **Virgin*** and with his greeting “Rejoice!” he brought good **tidings,*** **that** the Deliverer would come **forth from her.*** And so, accepting his salutation with **faith,*** she conceived You, the **pre-eternal God,*** **who** was pleased to become man **ineffably,*** for the salvation of **our souls.**

verse: **Sing to the Lord, bless His Name.**
Proclaim His help day by day.

The Theotokos heard a voice she **knew not,*** when the Archangel brought her the glad tidings of the **Annunciation;* and** accepting the salutation with faith, she conceived You, the **pre-eternal God.*** Therefore in great rejoicing we also **cry to You:*** O God, who without change has been made **flesh from her,*** grant peace to the world, and to our souls great **mercy.**

verse: **Sing to the Lord a new song;**
sing to the Lord all the earth.

Lo, our restoration is now made **manifest to us:*** God **is ineffably united to men.*** At the words of the Archangel error is **laid low;* for** the Virgin receives joy,

and the things of the earth have become **heaven**.^{*} The world is loosened from the **ancient curse**.^{*} Let the creation rejoice exceedingly and raise its **voice to sing**:^{*} O Lord, our Maker and Deliverer, **glory to You**.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy **Spirit**,^{*} now and for **ever and ever**. **Amen** .

Today there come glad **tidings of joy**:^{*} it is the feast of the **Virgin**.^{*} **Things** below are joined to **things above**.^{*} Adam is renewed, Eve set free from her ancient **sorrow**;^{*} and the Tabernacle of the human nature which the Lord took upon **Himself**,^{*} making divine the substance **He assumed**,^{*} is consecrated as a **Temple of God**!^{*} O **mystery**!^{*} The **manner** of emptying **is unknown**,^{*} the fashion of His conceiving is ineffable.^{*} An angel ministers at the **wonder**;^{*} a **virgin** womb **receives the Son**.^{*} The Holy Spirit is sent down; the Father on high gives **His consent**;^{*} and so the covenant is brought to pass by common **counsel**.^{*} In **Him** and through Him **are we saved**,^{*} and together with Gabriel let us cry aloud to the **Virgin**:^{*} “Rejoice, O you who are full of grace: the Lord is **with you**.^{*} From **you** has Christ our God and our Salvation taken human **nature**,^{*} raising it **up to Himself**.^{*} Pray to Him that our **souls may be saved**.”

The Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady,
the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary
Commemorated on March 25

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century. The Council of Toledo in 656 mentions the Feast, and the Council in Trullo in 692 says that the Annunciation was celebrated during Great Lent.

The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as “good tidings.” This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of Saint Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the “beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery,” for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God’s promise to send a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15): “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel.” The Fathers of the Church understand “her seed” to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

We see this echoed in the Liturgy of Saint Basil, as well: “When man disobeyed Thee, the only true God who had created him, and was deceived by the guile of the serpent, becoming subject to death by his own transgressions, Thou, O God, in Thy righteous judgment, didst send him forth from Paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, yet providing for him the salvation of regeneration in Thy Christ Himself.”

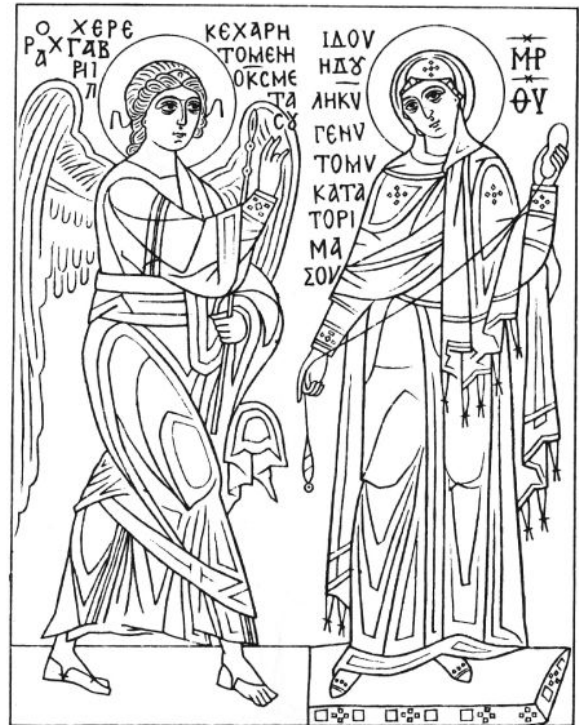
The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was betrothed to Saint Joseph: “Hail, thou who art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel's message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words, but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then said Mary unto the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34). "And the angel answered and said unto her, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore also that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.' And Mary said, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her." (Luke 1: 35-38)

The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message.

The Virgin is depicted either standing or sitting, usually holding yarn in her left hand. Sometimes she is shown holding a scroll. Her right hand may be raised to indicate her surprise at the message she is hearing. Her head is bowed, showing her consent and obedience. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven. In a famous icon from Sinai, a white dove is shown in the ray of light.



The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven. In a famous icon from Sinai, a white dove is shown in the ray of light.

The Annunciation falls during Lent, but it is always celebrated with great joy. The Liturgy of Saint Basil or Saint John Chrysostom is served, even on the weekdays of Lent. It is one of the two days of Great Lent on which the fast is relaxed and fish is permitted (Palm Sunday is the other).