



March 25 the Church celebrates **The Feast of The Annunciation of Our Lord**. A child conceived out of wedlock is hardly given a second thought today. Mary's time, however, is quite different. She has not "known" a man, (in the Biblical sense) therefore conception is impossible yet does take place. By the Word of The Holy Spirit, she conceives and will give birth to a Son as foretold in **Isaiah 7:14**. Although we do not know the exact dates of Christ's conception and birth; in the church year the dates of March 25 and December 25 are commemorated as the dates of conception and birth. These dates emphasize God's promise delivered to mankind; the virgin would conceive and give birth: The Word made flesh enters human history.

That the church year commemorates The Annunciation of Our Lord during the season of Lent is an important reminder of the promise of a Savior made and delivered in the person and work of Christ. His suffering and death are an important part of the season of Lent as we are called to reflect on what Jesus sacrificed and what He gives to us through His work of salvation.

Unlike the celebrations of other saints throughout the church year, the commemoration of the Feast of The Annunciation of Our Lord is a celebration of God's promises delivered in Christ. While we give thanks for the saints gone before and for their lives dedicated to God's work given to them and that they faithfully carried out the Lord's work in their time and place in human history, we remember they were human, sinners who needed Christ as their Savior as well. The celebration of the conception of Jesus is God's first promise of a Savior as given in **Genesis 3:15**. It is a part of God's Divine Plan of Salvation as the Savior entered human history to accomplish His work of saving sinners who were lost.

During Lent we lament and mourn over our sin. We pray for God's continued forgiveness and pledge our lives to serve Him while turning away from our past disobedience and sin to serve our Lord in His Kingdom with the help of the Holy Spirit. The Annunciation of Our Lord shows how God faithfully carried out His plan of salvation given through Christ in every detail. The Savior must be Man because human blood must be shed. The Savior must be Man so that He could die on the cross, the sacrifice for the sin of the world. The Savior must be God so that He could live in perfect obedience to The Law of God then rise in triumph on The Third Day to conquer sin, death, and the devil forever. The God/Man, Jesus accomplished all this by His perfect sacrifice, death, and resurrection.

Jesus has come, fulfilling the promise of a Savior as we have celebrated Christmas and Epiphany, revealing our Savior to the nations. Now, we continue through the season of Lent looking to Christ and His cross where our Savior shed His blood giving forgiveness life and salvation. Easter will bring The Resurrection of Our Lord, the Divine work of salvation, brought about through Christ given to us that we are now God's own children through our Savior Jesus Christ. As Mary accepted the Angel Gabriel's words, she said, "**Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word**" **St. Luke 2:38** so too, we hear God's Word and give thanks for all His mercies given in Christ our Savior.

The Collect (Prayer of The Day) for **The Annunciation of Our Lord (March 25)** directs our attention to God's promises, given through Christ our Savior, to bring to us the forgiveness of sins through His Passion, bringing us to everlasting life.

O Lord, as we have known the incarnation of Your Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of the angel to the Virgin Mary, so by the message of His cross and passion, bring us to the glory of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

In Christ,  
Pastor Ahrendt