

## Reflection on today's readings

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION 25 March

First Reading Is 7: 10-14, 8:10

The Lord will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son.

Second Reading Hb 10:4-10

Christ said on coming into the world: You took no pleasure in holocausts or sacrifices for sin; then I said, 'God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will.'

Gospel Reading Lk 1: 26-38

'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.'

'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary, 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.



## Reflection

Today's feast is among the most cherished of all the liturgical celebrations in the calendar. Our hearts and imagination are touched by the poignancy of God's call to a young girl from a remote village.

The infinite God 'bows down' before this adolescent woman who in turn bows in surrender to the will of her creator. In this simple exchange, far from the centres of important decision making, God's gracious will for the salvation of the entire human race comes to fruition.

The eternal Son who is born  
In the eternal heart of the Father  
Becomes submissive to time  
And chooses a mother in the world.

*Ancient hymn, author unknown*

For ourselves, this feast reminds us not to be surprised at the manner in which God's will presents itself to us. Mary underwent a steep learning curve through because of the possibility of shame and rejection, even of her life being in danger. Obeying God's will for her, she is peaceful, strong and noble in carrying out the purpose proposed to her by Gabriel. It's no coincidence that the angel's name means 'God is strong'.

The beauty of this feast consists in the divine condescension towards Mary, and through her, towards us all.

There is beauty equally in the human availability of Mary's surrender to God, and in her availability makes possible our salvation.

Carmelite sister, Ruth Burrows, said it all simply: "The day itself is willed by God."