

Dear Parishioners,

Good day! Today is March 25, 2020, the Solemnity of the Annunciation. Today's Mass is being offered for the repose of the soul of Gertrude Quillen. Please pray for her.

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Archdiocese of Washington's website, adw.org/coronavirus, provides wonderful faith and prayer resources online, as well as frequent updates regarding the coronavirus. I recommend you visit the site often during the crisis.

The annual ADW Jubilarian Celebration of marriage, honors couples married 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 51+ years. Mass will be held on Sunday, **June 28, 2020 at 2:00pm** at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception with his Excellency, Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory, as the celebrant. **Please call the parish office to register. Even if you cannot attend the event, the Archdiocese will issue you a congratulatory certificate.**

I recommend two online Catholic websites that provide wonderful faith resources for children, adults, and families: formed.org, sponsored by the St. Augustine Institute and stpaulcenter.com, sponsored by Dr. Scott Hahn. Check them out. They will help you continue your formation in the faith during this present crisis and beyond.

I wish to thank the Ladies of Charity who at the beginning of the coronavirus crisis called all our parish families to let them know about the suspension of public Mass and to assure them of our prayers. I also wish to thank the Ladies and members of our parish staff who are keeping our parish food pantry open in this difficult time to assist the needy in our community.

If you know of a parishioner who is internet-connected, you might remind them that they can go to our parish website, www.sthughofgrenoble.org, for my daily message and other pertinent information. You might also let them know they can join Flocknotes, the communications platform that allows them to receive emails from the parish. To join Flocknotes, all they need to do is email the parish office at sthughoffice@gmail.com to let us know.

REFLECTIONS FROM TODAY'S LITURGY

Here is today's daily prayer from the Church's liturgy:

O God, who willed that your Word should take on the reality of human flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary, grant, we pray, that we, who confess our Redeemer to be God and man, may merit to become partakers even in his divine nature. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

The readings of today's liturgy, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, are from the prophet Isaiah, the Letter to the Hebrews, and the Gospel of Luke.

In the first reading we hear of a sign that God delivered to King Ahaz through the prophet Isaiah, when the Kingdom of Judah was mortally threatened by the Assyrians and many of the people feared that God had abandoned them: a virgin will be with child and bear a son, whose symbolic name will be Emmanuel, which means "God Is With Us."

People in Ahaz's day might have seen this sign fulfilled in the birth of Ahaz's son, Hezekiah, who with God's help preserved the people from the Assyrian menace. As Christians we know the sign is fulfilled for all time in the birth of Jesus, who is literally "God with us."

The Letter to the Hebrews quotes Psalm 40 to speak of the Incarnation of God's Son: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me." The sacrifices and offerings of the Old Covenant could do no more than express the people's desire to be reconciled to God. It is only through the Incarnation of God's Son, "the body" God prepared for him, that our reconciliation with God is accomplished.

The gospel tells the story of the Annunciation, which is the story of how the Word became flesh. God prepares a body for his divine Son through the free cooperation of the Virgin Mary. The Incarnation took place because Mary said Yes to God's plan for her. She is overshadowed by the Holy Spirit and conceives Jesus while remaining a virgin.

God planned before all ages to save the human race from its sins through the Incarnation of his Son. He chose the Virgin Mary to give our human nature to his eternal Son, so that God's Son could work our salvation by suffering, dying and rising again in that nature. But his plan would not have gone forward without Mary's free consent. In the same way, God has chosen us to receive salvation by sharing in the suffering, death and Resurrection of his Incarnate Son, Jesus Christ. But his plan for us will not go forward without our free consent.

Thought questions for the day: Mary always said Yes to God's plan for her. Do I consent to God's plan for me? How can a strong relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary help me become a more faithful follower of her Son? What can I do to start or strengthen such a relationship with the Mother of God?

Here is a beautiful prayer to the Blessed Mother that we can say today to thank her for saying Yes to God:

O Mary, you always brighten our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who, at the Cross, took part in Jesus' pain while remaining steadfast in faith. O loving Mother, you know what we need, and we are confident you will provide for us as at Cana in Galilee. Intercede for us with your Son Jesus, the Divine Physician, for those who have fallen ill, for those who are vulnerable, and for those who have died. Intercede also for those charged with protecting the health and safety of others and for those who are tending to the sick and seeking a cure. Help us, O Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who took upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows, so as to lead us, through the Cross, to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection we seek refuge, O Holy Mother of God. In our needs, despise not our petitions, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, St. Joseph and St. Hugh, pray for us!

Yours in Christ,

Father Walter