

Lenten Reflections

March 25, 2020



St Francis Receiving the Stigmata – El Greco – Public Domain

<https://art.thewalters.org/detail/6457/saint-francis-receiving-the-stigmata-2/>

The theme running through the readings for this Solemnity of the Annunciation of our Lord is one of complete trust and total openness to God. The first reading states that if we are open to and trust God, the sign that He gives us is His Presence in our lives – Emmanuel—GOD with us. Because our trust and confidence in Him allows us to experience His Presence in our lives this promise is especially important and meaningful to us as He fulfills this covenant in us.

The Responsorial Psalm emphasizes our willingness to obey His Will in complete surrender: Here I am, Lord, I come to do Your Will. Our response is given freely with trust.

The second reading explains that God doesn't want blind obedience without loving acceptance of His Will. So we read: holocausts and sin-offerings are not desired (they only fulfill the LAW), but He wants us to give all out of love: "Behold, I come to do Your Will"; so in His Will we are consecrated through the offering of the Body and Blood of Christ. (Heb. 10, 10)

In the Gospel, as the angel Gabriel announces God's plan to Mary she submits in faith and openness "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1: 37-38) without even considering what God is asking of her, she obeys with complete acceptance and willingness to do God's will and carry out His plan.

The Gospel acclamation sums up the lesson that even Jesus, Second Person of the Trinity, gave complete love and trust to His Father as we read: "The Word of God became Flesh and made His dwelling among us and we saw His glory." (Jn. 1:14 AB)

If we take time each day to have a deeper awareness of God's presence in our lives we will come to a closer understanding of how

we can at least begin to understand the real meaning of complete openness and surrender to a Father whose love is deeper and greater than anything we have yet been able to comprehend. May Jesus continue to come into our lives and be for us – GOD WITH US!

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Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

Lectionary: 545

Reading 1 [Is 7:10-14; 8:10](#)

The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying:

Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God;
let it be deep as the nether world, or high as the sky!

But Ahaz answered,

“I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!”

Then Isaiah said:

Listen, O house of David!

Is it not enough for you to weary people,
must you also weary my God?

Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign:
the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son,
and shall name him Emmanuel,
which means “God is with us!”

Responsorial Psalm [40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11](#)

R. (8a and 9a) Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Sacrifice or oblation you wished not,
but ears open to obedience you gave me.
Holocausts or sin-offerings you sought not;
then said I, “Behold I come.”

R. Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

“In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,
To do your will, O my God, is my delight,
and your law is within my heart!”

R. Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

I announced your justice in the vast assembly;
I did not restrain my lips, as you, O LORD, know.

R. Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Your justice I kept not hid within my heart;
your faithfulness and your salvation I have spoken of;
I have made no secret of your kindness and your truth

in the vast assembly.

R. Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Reading 2 [Heb 10:4-10](#)

Brothers and sisters:

It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats
take away sins.

For this reason, when Christ came into the world, he said:

“Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,
but a body you prepared for me;
in holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight.
Then I said, ‘As is written of me in the scroll,
behold, I come to do your will, O God.’”

First he says, “Sacrifices and offerings,
holocausts and sin offerings,
you neither desired nor delighted in.”
These are offered according to the law.
Then he says, “Behold, I come to do your will.”
He takes away the first to establish the second.
By this “will,” we have been consecrated
through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Verse Before the Gospel [Jn 1:14ab](#)

The Word of God became flesh and made his dwelling among us;
and we saw his glory.

Gospel [Lk 1:26-38](#)

The angel Gabriel was sent from God
to a town of Galilee called Nazareth,
to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph,
of the house of David,
and the virgin’s name was Mary.
And coming to her, he said,
“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.”
But she was greatly troubled at what was said
and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.
Then the angel said to her,
“Do not be afraid, Mary,
for you have found favor with God.
Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son,
and you shall name him Jesus.
He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High,
and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father,

and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever,
and of his Kingdom there will be no end.”
But Mary said to the angel,
“How can this be,
since I have no relations with a man?”
And the angel said to her in reply,
“The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.
Therefore the child to be born
will be called holy, the Son of God.
And behold, Elizabeth, your relative,
has also conceived a son in her old age,
and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren;
for nothing will be impossible for God.”
Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.
May it be done to me according to your word.”
Then the angel departed from her.