

Mary's Annunciation

On the day upon which the Church celebrates the feast, I had a vision of Mary's Annunciation.

I saw the Blessed Virgin a short time after her marriage in the house of Nazareth. Joseph was not there. He was at that moment journeying with two beasts of burden on the road to Tiberias, whither he was going to get his tools. But Anne was in the house with her maid and two of the virgins who had been with Mary in the Temple. Everything in the house had been newly arranged by Anne. Toward evening, they all prayed standing around a circular stool from which they afterward ate vegetables that had been served. Anne seemed to be very busy about the household affairs, and for a time she moved around



here and there, while the Blessed Virgin ascended the steps to her room. There she put on a long, white, woolen garment, such as it was customary to wear during prayer, a girdle around her waist, and a yellowish-white veil over her head. The maid entered, lighted the branched lamp, and retired. Mary drew out a little, low table, which stood folded by the wall, and placed it in the center of the room. It had a semicircular leaf, which could be raised on a movable support so that when ready for use the little table stood on three legs. Mary spread upon it a red and then a white, transparent cover, which hung down on the side opposite the leaf. It was fringed at the end and embroidered in the center. A white cover was spread on the rounded edge. When the little table was prepared, Mary laid a small, round cushion before it and, resting both hands on the leaf, she gently sank on her knees, her back turned to her couch, the door of the chamber to her right. The floor was carpeted. Mary lowered her veil over her face, and folded her hands, but not the fingers, upon her breast. I saw her praying for a long time with intense fervor. She prayed for Redemption, for the promised King, and that her own supplications might have some influence upon His coming. She knelt long, as if in ecstasy, her face raised to Heaven; then she drooped her head upon her breast and thus continued her prayer. And now she glanced to the right and beheld a radiant youth with flowing, yellow hair. It was the archangel Gabriel. His feet did not touch the ground. In an oblique line and surrounded by an effulgence of light and glory, he came floating down to Mary. The lamp grew dim, for the whole room was lighted up by the glory.

The angel, with hands gently raised before his breast, spoke to Mary. I saw

the words like letters of glittering light issuing from his lips. Mary replied, but without looking up. Then the angel again spoke and Mary, as if in obedience to his command, raised her veil a little, glanced at him, and said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done unto me according to thy word!" I saw her now in deeper ecstasy. The ceiling of the room vanished, and over the house appeared a luminous cloud with a pathway of light leading up from it to the opened heavens. Far up in the source of this light, I beheld a vision of the Most Holy Trinity. It was like a triangle of glory, and I thought that I saw therein the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

As Mary uttered the words: "May it be done unto me according to thy word!" I saw an apparition of the Holy Ghost. The countenance was human and the whole apparition environed by dazzling splendor, as if surrounded by wings.

From the breast and hands, I saw issuing three streams of light. They penetrated the right side of the Blessed Virgin and united into one under her heart. At that instant Mary became perfectly transparent and luminous. It was as if opacity disappeared like darkness before that flood of light. While the angel and with him the streams of glory vanished, I saw down the path of light that led up to Heaven, showers of half-blown roses and tiny green leaves falling upon Mary. She, entirely absorbed in self, saw in herself the Incarnate Son of God, a tiny, human form of light with all the members, even to the little fingers perfect. It was about midnight that I saw this mystery.

Some time elapsed, and then Anne and the other women entered Mary's room, but when they beheld her in ecstasy they immediately withdrew. The Blessed Virgin then arose, stepped to the little altar on the wall, let down the picture of a swathed child that was rolled above it, and prayed standing under the lamp before it. Only toward morning did she lie down. Mary was at this time a little over fourteen years old.

An intuitive knowledge of what had taken place was conferred upon Anne. Mary knew that she had conceived the Redeemer, yes, her interior lay open before her, and so she already understood that her Son's kingdom should be a supernatural one, and that the House of Jacob, the Church, would be the reunion of regenerate mankind. She knew that the Redeemer would be the King of His people, that He would purify them and render them victorious; but that in order to redeem them He must suffer and die.

It was explained to me likewise why the Redeemer remained nine months in His mother's womb, why He was born a little child and not a perfect man like Adam, and why also He did not take the beauty of Adam in Paradise. The Incarnate Son of God willed to be conceived and born that conception and birth, rendered so very unholy by the Fall, might again become holy. Mary

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was His Mother, and He did not come sooner because Mary was the first and the only woman conceived without sin. Jesus when put to death was thirty-three years, four months, and two weeks old.

I thought all the while: Here in Nazareth, things are different from what they are in Jerusalem. There the women dare not set foot in the Temple, but here in this church at Nazareth, a virgin is herself the Temple and the Most Holy rests in her.