

## Annunciation

“Today is the crown of our salvation, and the revelation of the mystery which is from before the ages! The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel announces the glad tidings of grace. Wherefore, with him let us cry out to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O you who are full of grace! The Lord is with you!” (Troparion of the Annunciation)

As we hear in the troparion of today’s feast, today truly is the crown of our salvation. God waited until this moment in the history of the whole world to reach out to a young teenage girl to ask her if she would be the Mother of the Savior of the world. God waited until the Holy Virgin Mary was born in all of time and history because He knew out of everyone who has ever lived or will live, she would be the person most likely to answer “yes” to His plan. She would answer on behalf of the whole human race, yes, we want a Savior. We are wanting to be reconciled and united with God after so many years of separation. Although after the Archangel Gabriel explained to her how this would take place, it had to be in the back of her mind would Joseph believe her and if she was turned over to the authorities for adultery, the penalty for adultery was stoning. So with her answer to the archangel, “let it be done to me according to your word,” Mary put forth God’s plan into action and also became a martyr in Spirit because she was willing to even lay down her life to follow God’s plan for her.

This is the reason the Archangel Gabriel greets the Theotokos with the words, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women.” Every Jewish girl and woman dreamed of one day being the mother of the Messiah, who would save Israel. And God chose Mary as that person. The Lord was with her because she was already with the Lord by the life she had been living. By her cooperation with the Holy Spirit, she had prepared herself to become a fit temple for the Lord. As St. Paul says, “God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.” The Holy Theotokos, Mary, made those words become a living reality. Through her prayers, may we also have God dwelling in us.