

The Annunciation

(the modern form of devotion to Mary and the Incarnation)

***The form as we know it appears for the first time-according to J. Fournée in his *The History of the Angelus. The Angel's Message to Mary* (Lev, 1997)-in *The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Officium parvum BMV)*, printed in Rome during the time of Pope Pius V (1566-1572), and also in the *Manuale catholicorum (Handbook for Catholics)* by the Jesuit St. Peter Canisius, published in Antwerp in 1588. In older manuals of devotion, according to the date of their publication, the *Angelus* may mention Pope Benedict XIV (14 September 1742) and Pope Leo XIII (15 March 1884) as its great promoters.

The greatest artists have chosen to immortalize this moment: Mary is usually shown kneeling or seated and sometimes has a book in her hand or nearby. The tradition preferred in the West and known in the East only because of Western influence (see the 16th century Mount Athos frescoes) likes to visualize Mary meditating on the Bible, and more precisely, according to the suppositions of the Fathers of the Church, on the passage by the prophet Isaiah (7, 14): "Behold, a virgin will conceive...", or reading the Psalter, as reported in the *Meditationes vitae Christi (Meditations on the Life of Christ)*, a book dear to late medieval artists.

***(excerpted from: www.ewtn.com)

*****Quote:** "Enriched from the first instant of her conception with the splendor of an entirely unique holiness, the virgin of Nazareth is hailed by the heralding angel, by divine command, as 'full of grace' (cf. Luke 1:28). To the heavenly messenger she replies: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word' (Luke 1:38). Thus the daughter of Adam, Mary, consenting to the word of God, became the Mother of Jesus. Committing herself wholeheartedly and impeded by no sin to God's saving will, she devoted herself totally, as a handmaid of the Lord, to the person and work of her Son, under and with him, serving the mystery of redemption, by the grace of Almighty God" (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, 56).

***(excerpted from saint of the day).



Sadly, there are few places where the Angelus is still rung consistently. Vatican City still chimes the Angelus, as do traditional monasteries and convents. Some people who had a strict up-bringing in Catholicism automatically pray the Angelus at 6:00am, noon (especially) and 6:00pm. Not very many churches pray the Angelus, but at Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Parish, Newton, the Angelus is sung every Sunday after the 10:30am Tridentine Latin High Mass.

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The Angelus



"The Angelus" by Jean-François Millet (1857)
Louvre, Paris

Two young people, a young peasant and his companion, have interrupted their work. They are standing up against the bright sky; they are meditating and praying to the Creator silently. Actually the Angelus is ringing in the distance, from the steeple of the village church that can be seen on the horizon on the bright sky golden with sunset.

A deep religious feeling radiates from this famous painting that is said to be the most beautiful painting of the modern school and that it is undoubtedly the masterpiece of Jean-François Millet and one of the most celebrated and reproduced images of prayer.

Angelus

*The Angelus (Latin for Angel) is a Christian devotion in memory of the Incarnation. The name Angelus is derived from the opening words: Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae (“...the Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary...” and is practiced by reciting as versicle and response three Biblical verses describing the mystery; alternating with the salutation “Hail Mary!” The Angelus exemplifies a species of prayers called prayer of the devotee.

The devotion was traditionally recited in Roman Catholic churches, convents, and monasteries three times daily: 6:00am, noon, and 6:00 pm (many churches still follow the devotion, and some practice it at home). The Angelus is usually accompanied by the ringing of the Angelus bell, which is a call to prayer. The angel referred to in the prayer is Gabriel, a messenger of God who revealed to Mary that she would conceive a child to be born the Son of God. (Luke 1:26-38)

History

The Catholic Encyclopedia states that “The history of the Angelus is by no means easy to trace with confidence, and it is well to distinguish in this matter between what is certain and what is in some measure conjectural.” This is an old devotion which was already well established 700 years ago. The Angelus originated with the 11th century monastic custom of reciting three Hail Mary’s during the evening bell. The first written documentation stems from Italian Franciscan monk Sinigardi di Arezzo (died 1282). Franciscan monasteries in Italy document the use in 1263 and 1295. The Angelus is included in a Venetian Catechism from 1560. The older usages seem to have commemorated the resurrection of Christ in the morning, his suffering at noon and the annunciation in the evening. In 1269, St. Bonaventure urged the faithful to adopt the custom of the Franciscans of saying three Hail Mary’s as the evening bell is rung.

*(excerpted from: en.wikipedia.org)

THE ANGELUS

**The Angelus Prayer is prayed standing and is replaced by the Regina Coeli during Eastertide, and is not used on Good Friday or Holy Saturday. It is the common practice during the recital of the prayer, for the lines “Et Verbum caro factum est/Et habitavit in nobis”, that those reciting the prayer bow or genuflect. Either of these actions draws attention to the moment of the Incarnation of Christ into human flesh.

LATIN

The Angelus

V. Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae

R. Et concepit de Spiritu Sancto

ALL: Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc, et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen

V. Ecce ancilla Domini.

R. Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

ALL: Ave Maria...

V. Et verbum caro factum est.

R. Et habitavit in nobis.

ALL: Ave Maria...

**Bow or
genuflect**

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei genetrix.

R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

V. Oremus. Gratiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris infunde; ut qui, Angelo nuntiante, Christi filii tui incarnationem cognovimus, per passionem eius et crucem, ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

ALL: AMEN.

EASTERTIDE

REGINA COELI:

All: Regina coeli, laetare, alleluia: Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia. Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia. Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.

V. Gaude et laetare, Virgo Maria, Alleluia.

R. Quia surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia.

V. Oremus: Deus qui per resurrectionem Filii tui, Domini nostri Jesu Christi, mundum laetificare dignatus es: praesta, quaesumus, ut per eius Genetricem Virginem Mariam, perpetuae capiamus gaudia vitae. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

** (excerpted from: fisheaters.com)