

SHARING THE SCRIPTURE

Tell the story of The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) using any of the following methods:

- 3D storytelling materials. See suggested script - Resource Sheet 1 from Unit 3.8 - Advent to Christmas: A time for Responding in Love. Refer to Resource sheet1.
- Read the text from the Bible (Luke 1:26-38)
- After sharing the passage, view any of the video links below.

ENGAGING IN WONDERING

The “I wonder” statements engage students with the story, invite reflection and elicit their ideas and thoughts. Wondering together teaches the art of dialogue, of listening to others, accepting and learning from others’ ideas and contributions. There are no “right” answers to wondering statements. They are not comprehension questions. Wondering statements are only the beginning of wondering. Open wondering statements signal to the children the on-going and life-long process of engaging with the mystery of God.

Examples of I wonder questions:

- I wonder...why God chose Mary to be the mother of his Son?
- I wonder...how Mary felt when the angel left?
- I wonder... when you have said yes to something that was new and scary?
- I wonder... what you find amazing, or puzzling, in this story?
- I wonder... what Gabriel’s words, “Nothing is impossible to God” mean?
- I wonder... what part of the story you liked best?
- I wonder... what part of the story is the most important?

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES - THE ANNUNCIATION

Choose any of the activities below. You may use as many, or as few as you like. They are intended to help the students explore the theme, evoke wonder and stimulate their religious imagination. It is intended that the students will enter into the story, uncover its meanings and discover its impact on their own lives. The activities are listed from lower, to higher order thinking.

Once students have explored the story of the Annunciation, the Angelus prayer should be unpacked in small parts and connections made between the story and the prayer. Some Angelus specific activities are included below.

YEARS K-2

- Ask the students to choose the part of the Annunciation story they would like to paint or draw. Engage the children with questions about their work, e.g. what part of the story is this? What is happening here?
- Gather and display a variety of images of the Annunciation. Engage students in retelling the story in their own words. Talk about why so many different artists have painted this story. Explain that when Mary said ‘Yes’ to God she helped God’s promise to send a Messiah come true. Display the words for the first part of the ‘Hail Mary’ and relate it to the images.
- Divide students into groups to illustrate one part of the story and write an accompanying caption. Make into a wall story or a ‘Mary says Yes’ book

YEARS 3-6 (MAY BE ADAPTED FOR STAGE 4, SECONDARY)

- Discuss experiences associated with other Marian images. Sing some simple songs about Mary (see Music Resource List, below)
- Conduct a guided meditation using the scripture - This allows students to imagine the detail, puts them into the story and allows them to be present to the events.
- Compare the Annunciation scripture to the Angelus.
- Mary says 'Yes' to God's invitation to be the mother of Jesus, who is the Word of God made flesh. Present students with an Annunciation artwork. Ask students if they recognise what is happening, if they can tell you parts of the story. Assist students to relate the Angelus to the artwork.
- In small groups, students create, act out and photograph three or four freeze frame images representing the beginning, middle and end of the Annunciation Story. Students then create a short phrase or word as a caption for each of their photographs.
- Ask the students what questions they would like to ask Mary about the visit of the angel. Students could then participate in a 'hot-seat' activity, where they answer questions from others, as if they were Mary themselves.
- Ask students to imagine they are Mary, going with their mother or father to collect water from the town well. Now, ask them to consider the same situation in modern day times. How might the story look today? Students create a modernised version of the annunciation story. This could be a narrative, or in the form of a play script. Note for teachers: 'virgin' needs to be addressed sensitively. Secondary students may ask how it is possible. Be prepared with an answer that is credible - Read Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 502-506 and refer to this if the question arises.
- Mary says 'Yes' to God. What might Mary have been afraid of in the angel's message? Describe a time when you were asked to do something special, but may have been nervous or afraid. This could be a dear diary exercise for upper primary and lower secondary or reflection questions for upper secondary students.

YEARS 7-10 (MAY BE ADAPTED FOR STAGE 3, PRIMARY)

- Discuss the implications of Mary saying yes to God. Invite them to reflect on what saying yes means in the long term. Lead students to realise that Mary's yes was for her whole life, not just an agreement to have a baby at that time.
- Ask students to think about life long commitments in their own life, both now and in the future. Write them down and talk about the possible consequences or implications of these commitments.
- Remind the students of Catholic prayers which celebrate the great event of the Annunciation (Hail Mary, Magnificat,) focusing on the Angelus. Display the prayer and review each section. Language may need to be simplified for some students.
- Rewrite the prayer in your own words (as a whole class if you feel it would be more appropriate). As the prayer is written, groups of children could each illustrate a part of the simplified prayer. This could also be done on a PowerPoint by the teacher, adding the text and pictures, displaying the finished product at the end of the lesson.
- In pairs, write a comparison of two contrasting artworks. Students then work on their own artistic interpretation of the Annunciation, including at least one verse of Scripture.
- Search for the World Youth Day Icon of Our Lady. Place this icon or a similar image of Mary in a place of honour at home and school.
- Extension activity: Luke says of Mary "She pondered all these things and treasured them in her heart". Imagine Mary toward the end of her life. Write a reflection of some of her most treasured memories, especially the visit of the angel Gabriel.
- Ask students to observe details of the Fra Angelico painting of 'The Annunciation'. Discuss as many observations as possible. This could be done as an introduction to the lesson of breaking open the prayer or the reading.
- After a general discussion, choose some aspects of the painting and explore the beliefs they symbolise (refer Resource Sheet 3). This conversation is not meant to be exhaustive. It will

give students a taste of the religious art, and ways it might communicate belief. This artwork emphasises the glory of God and the place of honour we give to Mary.

- Students compare this artwork with a more contemporary artwork on the Annunciation (see <http://www.wga.hu/index1.html> and type 'annunciation' into search) and explore the differences and similarities in what each artwork communicates. Explain that differences may not contradict each other, but depict different emphases in interpreting the Annunciation. Note the depiction of the Annunciation across time and cultures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES - THE ANGELUS SPECIFIC

Once students have explored the story of the Annunciation, the Angelus prayer should be unpacked in small parts and connections made between the story and the prayer.

- Students listen to the audio of "Angelus, with Bells".
- Engage in I wonder statements such as :
 - I wonder... what this part of the prayer means?
 - I wonder... why the Church has chosen to say this prayer every day around the world?
 - I wonder... what part of the prayer you liked best?
 - I wonder... what part of the prayer is the most important?
 - I wonder... why there are bells rung during the prayer?
- Review the Angelus Prayer. Students explore the structure, identifying the main sections. Students reflect on the timing of the bells. Listen to "Spoken Angelus Prayer with bells", identifying when and how many times they occur. Use Resource Sheet 2 to assist in a discussion of the history and structure of the Angelus.

VIDEO LINKS

[Short Animation of the Annunciation \(1:06\)](#)

[Animation of Zechariah and the Annunciation \(9:07\)](#)

IMAGE/ART LINKS

<http://www.wga.hu/index1.html> (Enter Annunciation into the search tab).

MUSIC RESOURCES

Mary Said Yes' - This is The Time (Songs for the Seasons), M Mangan.

Be it Done unto Me - As One Voice, Bob Hurd

Hail Mary, Full of Grace - Songs of Mary, John Burland

Mary O Blessed one - Songs of Mary, John Burland