

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



FAMILIES RECLAIMING SUNDAY

Read aloud: Isaiah 7:10-14
Hebrews 10:4-10
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Nine months until Christmas! This morning the Pauline children awoke to find a "pre"-Christmas present adorning the living room wall. An 11-by-14-inch gold-framed copy of the Angelus prayer had been hung up overnight. It was beautifully detailed with scrolling letters, bright colors, and little angels.

"Wow, Mom!" Mary Clare exclaimed, "That is so gorgeous!"

"Yes, it is, Mary Clare!" Mom agreed. "And the Angelus prayer is very special to me. I remember, when I was little, my grandmother teaching me this prayer. She said it every single day!"

"We learned it in *Family Formation!*" Lucy said excitedly.

Dad added, "And today is a particularly special day to say this prayer. Today is the feast of the Annunciation where Mary says 'yes' to being the mother of God. So, right after we read our Scripture reading from Luke, we are all going to say the Angelus prayer together as a family. Sound good?"

Everyone agreed and sat down to hear Dad read from Luke, Chapter 1, where Mary becomes part of God's plan for salvation. When Dad was finished, all eyes in the room turned to the newly-framed Angelus prayer on the wall. Dad began:

"The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary."

And everyone responded, *"And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.*

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

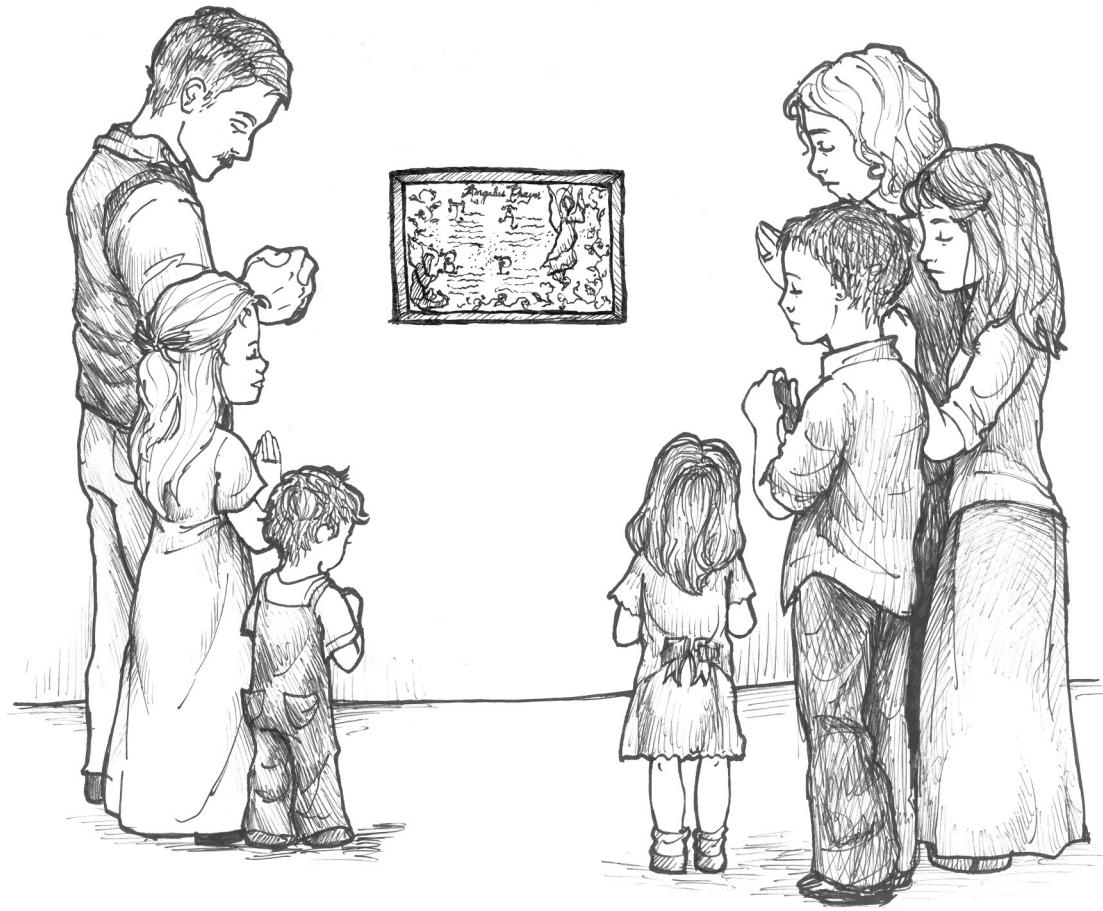
Blessed art thou among women,

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, mother of God,

pray for us sinners,

now, and at the hour of our death. Amen."



Dad went on, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord"

"Be it done unto me according to Thy Word," the family replied.

"Hail Mary, full of grace ... "

"And the Word was made flesh,"

"And dwelt among us."

"Hail Mary, full of grace ... "

"Pray for us, O holy mother of God."

"That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ."

Then Dad bowed his head and went on, "Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen."

"Well, Kids," Dad offered, "I really like that we will now have this framed reminder in our house of the most important event in the history of mankind, God becoming man!"

"That's right," Mom added. "I hope that it will remind us to say this prayer often. Just imagine! The second person of the Trinity becoming human and being conceived in Mary's womb."

"And what I think about is how quietly and silently it was done," Mary Clare stated. "Like Dad said, it was the most important event in the history of mankind, and there wasn't one picture taken, no trumpet blasts, or any fireworks."

"No fireworks!?" Vincent laughed.

"None!" Dad chuckled. "Mary simply said 'Yes, I accept.' *'May it be done to me according to your word.'* (Luke 1:38b) You see, Mary knew Sacred Scripture and knew Isaiah's prophecy in Isaiah 7:14 that *'the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.'* She clearly realized at that point that by saying 'yes,' she was to be the mother of God."

"Wasn't she even a little afraid?" little Hillary asked.

"Well, Hillary," Dad answered, "even though we read at first that Mary was deeply troubled, remember that the angel told her, *'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.'*" (Luke 1:30)

Then Mom added, "And remember, the angel told her how the Holy Spirit would come upon her, how this holy Child would be the Son of God, and how her cousin, Elizabeth, was also going to have a son."

"Neat, Mom," Vincent chimed in. "So, Mary knew right away that it was a boy and that Elizabeth was going to have a boy! They didn't have to wait for the baby to be born or to have an ultrasound, or nothing!"

"Vincent, you amaze me!" Dad said, laughing.

"So, as we listen to this reading today at Mass," Mom instructed, "let's all put on our special ears and know we are listening to the 'yes' heard throughout the ages! Can we all say, 'YES!' ? "

"YES!" the jubilant voices called out.

"And 'YES!' to only nine more months until Christmas!" Vincent cried, as he gleefully scampered out the door.