



Solemnity of the Lord's Annunciation

Titular Feast of the *Istituto Maria SS. Annunziata*

25 March 2021

The Solemnity of the Annunciation is the occasion for the *Istituto Maria SS. Annunziata* to deepen the mystery “he became incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary”. Such deepening sheds more light on the identity of the Institute itself and more “grace” on the vocation of each member of the Institute. Approaching a mystery of the Christian life always brings new and more richness to our interior life, and the mystery of the Incarnation runs through our entire Christian life and our choice of life as consecrated persons.

Mary upon the angel's annunciation says: “*May it be done to me according to your word*”, and this is the key, **she welcomes a Word**. This Word that Mary welcomes, becomes reality within her: “*and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*”. And it is this Word, and starting from this Word, that Mary oriented her whole life. Everything that Mary will live and will do after the Annunciation will start from that Word that was deposited in her.

This same Word that Mary received is the same that was deposited in us in our Baptism. In the baptism of Jesus, the Father said to him: “*You are my son; with you I am well pleased*”. In our baptism, the Father said to each of us the same Word that he said to his Son: You are my son; with you I am well pleased. And this Word spoken by the Father, when He pronounces it, He realizes in us what He says.

Each of us carries a word inside, carries a thought inside, carries an origin of his thoughts in his heart. We must ask ourselves if the word that is in our heart is the original one, the one that was deposited in Baptism, or, in the course of our life, that Word was set aside to make way for other words that have taken over and that today are at the origin and direct our thoughts, our choices, our relationships: words like vainglory, selfishness, self-interest, worldliness.... We are guided by the word we carry in our hearts.

Our problem, then, is not only that of receiving the Word, but of remaining in the Word in a permanent and effective way.

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In the childhood of Jesus, it is always emphasized: “*Mary kept these words in her heart*”.

The events of our life are signs, words that are spoken to us and which we must interpret in the light of the Word that is within us. For this reason, our attitude must be that of Mary, who, in addition to listening, the availability to receive the Word, kept these words in her heart, where to keep means to meditate and interpret the presence of God in human affairs, in our history. At the same time, we are asked to incarnate that Word which is within us in the experience of our daily life. Don Oreste Benzi said: “*what you are, shouts much louder than what you say*”.

The best wishes I want to extend to all the members of the *Istituto Maria SS. Annunziata* is that you would be bearers and witnesses of the Word in the events and realities of the world, which is the specificity of your vocation and mission.

In fraternity,

Rome, 25 March 2021



Fr. Vito Fracchiolla
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