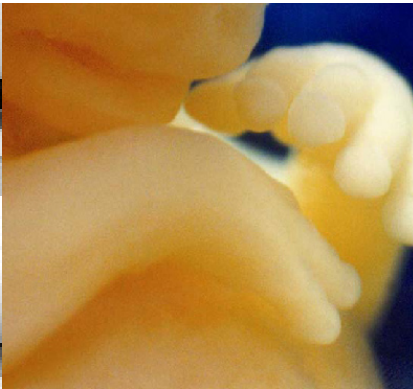


annunciation: what the natal life of Jesus teaches us about life





annunciation

Gabriel's announcement of the conception of Jesus Christ, the "annunciation," has always been considered one of the most important moments in the life of Jesus. It occurred on March 25, nine months before Christmas.

On that first annunciation day, the Archangel Gabriel announced to Mary, Mother of Jesus, that she was to be with child and would give birth to a son. This Child growing in Mary's womb would one day be described by the Apostle Paul as, ...*"being in very nature, God, [Jesus] did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."*

Jesus was Jesus from the moment he was conceived, not just from the moment he was born! Jesus took on the form of a human being, went through all of the processes of humanity, becoming fully human, even though he was fully God. Just like us, his body gradually wrapped itself around his spirit. Consider how much he shared our common humanity...



25 days

At twenty-five days from conception, the umbilical cord was formed. At four weeks, he was only one-fifth of an inch long, and yet his head was forming and his arms and legs had begun to appear as tiny bumps.

5 weeks

By five weeks, his arms and hands were already visible. His lungs and trachea were taking shape, along with his esophagus and stomach. These lungs were the same lungs that would one day propel air over his vocal chords as he preached to the multitude the greatest of moral teachings, the Sermon on the Mount. With these same lungs, he conversed over dinner with those considered outcasts in that society.

By this point, his major muscle groups were also in place. The leg muscles were there. With the same muscles he would hike across the hills of Samaria. His back muscles would be used to lift the lame man to his feet and children into his arms.



8 weeks

At eight weeks, he could wave and stretch his arms and could kick his tiny legs. With these same arms and legs he would one day, in his zeal, kick and overthrow tables in the temple as he confronted hypocrisy.

9-10 weeks

At nine to ten weeks, his cheeks filled out and his lips formed. He would use these same lips the evening of his resurrection to breathe on his disciples with the imperative,

"Receive the Holy Spirit"



10 weeks

At ten weeks he started to open and close his mouth. Taste buds formed on his tongue... the same taste buds that would one day savor the roasted lamb at his last Passover, and then be shocked by the taste of sour vinegar offered him as he hung on the cross.

He could yawn at this point, just as he yawned during those long nights of prayer overlooking the Sea of Galilee.

His eyelids had also formed by now...the same eyelids that would close his eyes in death just after he exclaimed, "*It is finished!*"



13 weeks

At thirteen weeks, curly black hair started to grow. He began to squint his eyes, just like he would do when the sun would shine on his face as he walked along the dusty roads of Galilee.

5 months

At five months from conception, Jesus often stuck his thumb into his mouth and sucked on it. He probably got so good at it that he could hit his mouth every time.



6 months

At six months, loud noises startled him. The sound of a hammer hitting iron made him jump. He didn't like it then any more than he did some thirty-three years later when the hammer of the Roman guard drove spikes through his hands and feet, affixing him in extreme pain to the cross.

7 months

At seven months, he opened his eyes. They were sensitive to bright lights and he could not yet make out shapes or colors. These were the same eyes that would weep over Jerusalem as he looked at it from the Mount of Olives and realized his people were missing their day of opportunity.





Mary understood choice. She was poor, young and single. She knew her son might be poor, like her, all his life. She knew he would not be entirely accepted. These things she knew. She also knew that pain doesn't last forever, but eternity does.

Thank you Mary, for making the

right choice.



Thank you, Jesus, that you did not
come to condemn the world, but to
save us.

Thank you, God, for sending your
only son, Jesus.

what you can do

to protect life

1. Pray (see prayer calendar on next page).
2. Form a Biblically-based opinion and speak out.
3. Teach children that they are “fearfully and wonderfully made” and that each life is valuable.
4. Join with other pro-life members at your church and beyond by becoming a church advocate for life.*
5. Volunteer at a local pregnancy clinic or home.*
6. Give financial gifts and/or material resources such as diapers, formula, maternity and baby clothes or furniture.*
7. Register to vote and vote pro-life.**
8. If you know any woman who is struggling with an abortion decision, give her the phone number for Life Choices: 1-877-NOT ALONE (1-877-668-2566)

*Contact projectprotectlife@comcast.net for more information.

**Visit positivechristianagenda.com for more information.

Project Protect Life is a Christian, pro-life ministry formed to encourage individuals and churches in the Pacific Northwest to come together to promote life in tangible ways. We work alongside existing Christian organizations that provide: abstinence programs, pregnancy clinics and counsel, maternity residential housing, adoption support, life skills courses and support groups including post-abortion healing.

Positive Christian Agenda is associated with local pro-life ministries including: Antioch Adoptions, Catholic Pro-Life Congress, Crisis Pregnancy Center, Human Life of Washington, Life Choices SHARE Program, Silent No More, Snowflake Mother, Special Delivery and Teen Aid.

prayer calendar

Sunday: Ask God the Father through Jesus Christ his Son to end abortion.

Monday: Pray that every woman experiencing an unplanned pregnancy today will choose life for her baby and that they will both choose eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Tuesday: Pray that our children will understand that they are “fearfully and wonderfully made” and that they will respect life.

Wednesday: Pray that abstinence messages will resonate with our nation’s youth.

Thursday: Pray that men and women struggling with the effects of abortion, will find forgiveness, healing and hope through Jesus.

Friday: Pray that the financial needs of our local pro-life ministries will be met.

Saturday: Ask God how you can help promote and protect life this year.



For reprint information, please contact Focus on the Family at family-permission@custhelp.com.

Photo copyright © 1998, Fundacja Zrodio Zaklad Wychowawca.

"Annunciation" painting by Janette Haley.

Written by Dr. Joseph B. Fuiten.

Nonprofit use only.

For additional copies, contact:

Dr. Joseph B. Fuiten

(425) 488-3600

www.cedarpark.org

© February 2007

ISBN-13: 978-0-9793546-1-8