



*March 18, 2009*

## **HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN ALEXIOS` REFLECTIONS ON THE ANNUNCIATION**

"Today is the beginning of our salvation,  
And the revelation of the eternal mystery!  
The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin  
As Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.  
Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos:

"Rejoice, O Full of Grace, The Lord is with You!"

One of the great and most ancient Feast Days of our Church is dedicated to the Mother of God, our most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary: the Feast Day of the Annunciation. We know from history that this wonderful Feast Day was already being celebrated in the fourth century, and there is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacombs dating from the second century.

In the Annunciation, we see love in action! This is the love that our God has for us, a love that is inconceivable to our minds. It is unthinkable that a Being who is the Creator of everything, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end, should have the desire to become human. How can this be? After all, God is infinite and we are finite.

Yet this is just what God did, by the assistance of a young girl, a pure innocent girl in her teens, to participate in the miracle that enabled us to be saved. Thus we see that there are actually two parts to the Annunciation: God's message of salvation and the response of the Virgin. This is the miracle that we celebrate on March 25, the Feast Day of the Annunciation.

In Greek, we call the Annunciation Evangelismos, meaning literally "spreading the Good News" of our Lord Jesus Christ and our salvation from sin, death and the power of the devil. Yet often this miracle goes

overlooked and unnoticed. How many of us will not even notice the commemoration of this great event? How many of us will even pause a moment to reflect on the Divine gift of our salvation?

We should observe the great Feast of the Annunciation, with prayer, worship and celebration, adding our own personal assent to that young girl's faithful and humble assent to the will of God, so that our salvation may be accomplished.

With faithful commitment to His service, I remain

Prayerfully yours with paternal love in Christ,

+ALEXIOS  
Metropolitan of Atlanta