



## DEVOTION: The Angelus

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**HISTORY & BACKGROUND:** The Angelus serves both to pay homage to the Incarnation and to venerate Mary. It gets its name from the opening verse-prayer: “The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.” The angelus consists of three short verses, with a Hail Mary after each, and concludes with a brief prayer.

The devotion originated in the Middle Ages. The Angelus became a “call to prayer” signaled by ringing church bells at 6 a.m., 12 noon and 6 p.m. The faithful customarily paused wherever they were and knelt in prayer at the appointed hours. Like a heavenly messenger, the Angelus calls man to interrupt his daily, earthly routines and turn to thoughts of God, of the Blessed Mother, and of eternity.

Today it is customarily prayed at midday. The Angelus is a prayer of call and response. The person leading the Angelus will pray particular verses e.g. “The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary”, to which all respond, “And she conceived of the Holy Spirit”. This pattern occurs throughout the prayer. The significance of standing while praying is modelled for us in our participation in the Mass. Furthermore, within the Angelus people customarily genuflect or bow at the words, “and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”.

**TIME REQUIRED:** Can be done in less than 10 minutes.

**SUPPLIES NEEDED:** bell (optional)

**SET UP:** none

**DIRECTIONS:**

**Call:** The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,  
**Response:** And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.  
Hail Mary...

**Call:** Behold the handmaid of the Lord,  
**Response:** Be it done unto me according to your Word.  
Hail Mary...

**Call:** And the Word was made flesh,  
**Response:** And dwelt among us.  
Hail Mary...

**Call:** Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,  
**Response:** That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

**Let us pray.** Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts: that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your 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

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*...to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace...Romans 8:6*

