



Podcast for the Solemnity of the Annunciation": 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021 - "A Mother's Always There

Mgr Daniel McHugh

*Journey of Faith - Life from Holy Mass - with Monsignor Daniel McHugh*

Hello, I am Monsignor Daniel McHugh: "A Mother's Always There". On Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March I visited the cemetery where my mother and father are buried. I went to pray and place fresh flowers at their Headstone. It was Mothers' Day and the cemetery at New Oscott was crowded. I feared at one stage: there were so many cars, and horns were going when some couldn't get free access! Afterwards I sent a picture to my sister as she couldn't get there, and exchanged pictures with my cousin who was at his mother's grave too. Later messages were coming in from Facebook friends, memories were being exchanged of the times when the mums were with us, and in many cases still are, of course. One shared a song from Keltic Country TV: it was by Jimmy Buckley in Irish "country style" called "My Mother". A phrase I noted was "A Mother's Always There" and I think that's why we were all at the cemetery on Mothers' Day.

It is no accident that Mothers' Day is on mid-Lent Sunday traditionally known as Laetare/Rejoice Sunday: it is close to the 25<sup>th</sup> March The Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 9 months before Christmas Day, when we celebrate the Birth of Jesus. More correctly Liturgically the Feast is now called the Annunciation of the Lord. We say in the Angelus Prayer to which we are summoned by the Church Bell at noon and 6pm: "The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary". "And she conceived by the Holy Spirit." There is a connection from the Middle Ages between the Solemnity on 25<sup>th</sup> March and our Mothering Sunday, when people used to return to the Church where they were Baptised to give thanks for Mother Church, where they were born again into New Life in Christ.

It is particularly special for us in England that when in 1066 the Lady Richeldis was asked in a vision to establish what is now the National Shrine of Our Lady, Walsingham: she was told to build a replica of the Holy House in Nazareth where the Annunciation took place, where the Angel announced to Mary she was to be Mother of God's Son, Jesus, and she said, "Be it done unto me according to thy word". The original Shrine was destroyed at the Reformation and the Catholic Shrine is now at the Slipper Chapel (one mile away) where originally people took off their shoes to walk the last mile barefoot to that sacred place. When we go on Pilgrimage we traditionally walk (if we are able) that mile and in Walsingham visit the grounds of the old priory where the Holy House was.

Wherever we are the Solemnity of the Annunciation is a day of special thanksgiving for Mary our Heavenly Mother, the woman who said "yes", and who is our model as we give thanks for the Incarnation, the Conception of Jesus Son of God and Son of Mary, the "Mother who is Always there" for all of us too, recalling the words of Jesus on the Cross

**Monsignor Daniel McHugh**

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to Mary: “Woman this is your Son” and to the Disciple “This is your Mother” and from that moment the Disciple made a place for her in his home”.

The reading is from the Gospel Saint Luke Chapter 1, the reading at Mass on the Solemnity...

Here ends the reading....

The Prayer is the final Prayer of the Mass...

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