

School Angelus Reflections

Day 1

Are you afraid of what God might be calling you to do?

So often we think of angels like babies with wings like the ones we see in many paintings representing them today. Yet, in the Bible Mary and others who were greeted by an angel, were afraid. When God wants us to do his will, it won't necessarily make us feel good inside. We very well might be afraid to do what God wants. May we have the courage to follow our fear today.

Day 2

What is God declaring about your life today?

When the angel comes to Mary, he "declares" his will to her. He doesn't ask if she's interested or even command her to do anything. He makes a statement of fact, "You will bear a child and name him Jesus." What is God declaring about you and your life today? May we be open to hearing and following his will.

Day 3

How can you be more in touch with the creative inspiration of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the giver of life. Writers, painters, sculptors, architects, actors, and all artists rely on the creative inspiration of the Holy Spirit to give life to their work. Creating art is an act of humility. Do something creative today. Get in touch with the Holy Spirit and write, draw, sing, or perform.

Inspired by *Praying the Angelus: Find Joy, Peace, and Purpose in Everyday Life*
by Jared Dees

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Day 4

What does the “Hail Mary” mean to you?

You will probably pray the Hail Mary prayer thousands of times throughout your life. Pause and think today about what this prayer means to you. Mary is full of grace. How can we become full of grace too? We ask Mary to pray for us. Who else can we turn to for prayers? Who else will pray for us at the hour of our death? May Mary, Mother of God, always protect us.

Day 5

What can people “behold” about you and your life?

When we hear the word “behold,” we expect to see something grand and amazing. Yet, Mary says, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord.” We are to behold a servant not a queen. Mary’s greatness is in the way she serves God. What are some of the ways you serve God? What can people “behold” about the way you serve God and help others?

Day 6

Do you think of God as your master or a fairy godmother?

In the story of Cinderella, a handmaid is saved by a fairy godmother. Mary, on the other hand, chooses to be a handmaid and through her service to God she is made into the Queen of Heaven. Today, look for opportunities to be God's handmaid. Like Mary, may we look for ways to serve God rather than expect him to serve us.

Day 7

How can you be more like Mary today?

In the Angelus, we imagine ourselves as Mary as we speak her words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord . . . Be it done unto me according to thy word." These are the only words of the Angelus taken from another person's mouth. Therefore, we become like Mary with these words as a humble servant of God who is entirely open to his will. May we look for ways to be a better servant to the Lord and more open to his will today.

Day 8

Are you ready to let God pick you?

It feels bad when you are the last person picked to join a team on the playground. Everyone wants to get picked first. Imagine how Mary felt. She got picked and an exciting new life opened up for her. God has picked you, too. God is picking you to be on his team to do something very special. Are you ready to do what he tells you?

Day 9

Are you willing to let God's will be done right away?

We call Mary's words "Be it done unto me" her *fiat*. *Fiat* is a word that means faith. Mary had great faith in God and submitted to his will without hesitation. With this strong faith, she is able to resist the temptation to say to God, "let it be done later." She doesn't hesitate and she doesn't hold back. Is there anything that you are hesitant to give up for God? Think about those things as you pray the Angelus today.

Day 10

How do you talk about God with someone who doesn't have faith?

The Word that became flesh, of course, is Jesus. Word, or *Logos* in Greek, is a concept that philosophers used to describe the principle of reason. Similarly, the word logic means to think clearly and strategically. Some people in this world try to convince themselves that there is no God. Yet, we believe in a God who is the source of reason. This is the very same God who became human. God is not just some abstract idea. God became one of us and walked among us on this earth.

Day 11

Have you felt hungry today? Have you experienced any pain no matter how small?

Hunger and pain in our bodies can often distract us. It should comfort us to know that even in these little annoying pains, we are united with God. God became man. He experienced hunger and pain just like we did. In unity with Christ, may we offer up all pain to those who suffer even greater than we do.

Day 12

Were you aware that God is with us during the day today?

Emmanuel is a name given to Jesus in the Gospels that means "God-is-with-us." We often sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" during the Advent and Christmas seasons to express our longing for God to be present among us. This name, Emmanuel, is a great reminder that we never have to feel alone. God is always with us. May we find comfort in Christ during those times when we feel most alone.

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Day 13

What do you feel when you bow your head?

Often when we pray, we bow our heads. We do this to show reverence and respect to God. It is also a sign of our humility. As God's humble servants we bow our heads in prayer pledging our lives to him. We bow before God who is humble too—so humble that he became one of us. May we humble ourselves to become like God, who humbled himself to become flesh like us.

Day 14

Are you willing to love Christ as much as Mary loved her son?

Mothers are an integral part of all our lives; we all feel—or at least we long to feel—great affection for mothers. Our God looked upon Mary, the Mother of God, with this same affection on earth and still does in heaven. This is why we seek her intercession. As you turn to Mary today to intercede on your behalf, imagine the love that Christ has for her. May we love him back with the same devotion as Mary.

Day 15

When was the last time you felt unworthy?

We can take on misguided attempts to make ourselves worthy through hard work when really it is God who made us and makes us worthy. Usually, when we feel unworthy it is because we fear rejection. Offer that fear to Mary, the Mother of God, to bring before the Lord on your behalf. Allow the Lord to fill the void that those feelings of unworthiness create inside of you.

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Day 16

What will you do with the grace God gives to you today?

As you pour a drink today observe this “pouring forth” from the faucet or container closely. Think now of God’s grace pouring forth and filling the cup of our hearts. What will you do with that grace today? Will you let it be poured forth into the lives and hearts of others?

Day 17

Has anyone ever given you a gift that you didn’t ask for or think you deserved?

When someone gives you something you don’t deserve, you feel like you owe him or her something in return. You either give a gift or send a thank you note. Grace is a free and undeserved gift. We hope that, filled with grace, we will be able to give the gift of our love back to God. Think about all the undeserved gifts you have received from God. How can you give back to God today?

Day 18

Have you ever tried to “offer it up”?

The next time you feel pain or discomfort, try the old practice of “offering it up.” It used to be a common practice among Catholic parents to tell their complaining children to “offer it up,” meaning offer up your pain for the souls in purgatory. This practice helps us and those for whom we offer up our pain because we recognize that our Lord, too, experienced pains just like ours and worse. In this way, we unite our pain with his. God became flesh, too, and experienced that pain just like us.

Name _____ Date _____

Day 19

What can you do that is kind and unexpected for someone today?

When we follow Christ to the cross, suffering takes on new meaning. Through our own choice to suffer for others, we are strengthened and supported by God. When we do something kind for another person, it makes that person feel good. It makes us feel good, too, especially when we aren't seeking any special recognition from others. May we always seek glory and honor in the eyes of the Lord, who sees what we have done even if no one else does.

Day 20

According to TV, movies, and sports, what does glory look like?

The Christian faith paints a different picture of glory than what we might be used to; it tells us that glory comes only through suffering and death—death to ourselves, death to selfishness. May we will follow Christ on a path of sacrificial love—the path to true glory—the glory of the Resurrection.

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