

the birth of Mary, and some details relating to the early life of Mary in the care of her mother. There are three Middle English stanzaic versions of the *Life of St. Anne* that drew upon this narrative and other sources.

John Lydgate (ca. 1370–1451) wrote two poems in honour of St. Anne. *A Praise of St. Anne* and *An Invocation to Seynte Anne* are significant contributions to the range of English poems on Anne between the 13th and the early 16th centuries, as are poems by Lydgate's contemporaries, John Audelay and Osbern Bokenham. Bokenham's *Life of St. Anne* is an extensive treatment of her life, one of thirteen the Augustinian friar wrote about female saints. Anne appears in several medieval plays, including the N-Town cycle and the Digby manuscript play of Candelmas Day and the killing of the children of Israel, which is set within the communal celebration of Saint Anne's Day. From the Renaissance onwards, however, references to Anne are scattered and limited.

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Peter Stiles

#### IV. Visual Arts

**1. Description of Normative Figure of Anne in the Visual Arts.** The visual paradigm for Anne, the mother of Mary, is a mature adult, often wearing a veil.

**2. Attribute and/or Symbol.** Anne appears often together with the Christ Child and a usually quite young Mary.

**3. Scriptural Episodes of Anne in the Visual Arts.** Mary's parents are not in scripture, but they are named as Anne and Joachim in the 2nd-century *Protevangelium of James*, which is the principal source of the *Legenda Aurea's* account of Mary's nativity. Until the late medieval period, Anne is seen mostly in narrative images based on the story of the annunciation to Anne, her meeting with Joachim at the Golden Gate in Jerusalem (*see* → plate 3.b), and her conception of Mary.

**4. Frequent Iconographic Motifs of Anne in the Visual Arts.** The richest period for Anne images was between about 1480 and 1520 in northern Europe. The popular devotion to St. Anne gave rise to the subject matter *Anna Selbdritt*: Anne herself the third. The subject of Anne's teaching Mary to read also developed in the Middle Ages.

**Works:** ■ *Cycle*: Portal, Notre Dame, Paris; Giotto, Padua; Quinten Metsijs. ■ *The Annunciation*: Gospel of James; Kahrîé Djami, Istanbul; Jean Soulds, Cathedral, Chartres. ■ *The Meeting of Joachim and Anne before the Golden Gate*: Taddeo Gaddi, Santa Croce, Florence; Filippino Lippi; Cristoforo de Predis; Albrecht Dürer. ■ *Anne Teaches Mary to Read*: Breviary Anne of Bretagne; Rubens; Caravaggio. ■ *Anna Selbdritt*:

Choir, St. Nikolai, Stralsund; Leonardo da Vinci, Dom, Regensburg; Tilman Riemenschneider; Albrecht Dürer; Lucas Cranach; Hugo van der Goes.

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Barbara Baert

*See also* → Joachim (Father of Mary); → Mary (Mother of Jesus)

#### Annet, Peter

Peter Annet (1693–1769) was an English deist and vigorous participant in mid-18th-century debates on miracles. An energetic advocate for examining biblical texts through the lens of unfettered reason, Annet rejected the validity of the virgin birth and the resurrection as contrary to the "constant course of nature." He read scripture in a manner to discredit the character of Moses and David and suggested that the Apostle Paul founded a new religion. Charged in 1762 with blasphemy, he was convicted, fined, pilloried and imprisoned for a year.

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James Deming

#### Annias

Annias (Αννιάς) is a Greek form of the Hebrew name Hananiah. It occurs in this form only in 1 Esd 5:16, and not in the parallel passages in Ezra or Nehemiah. This Annias is the progenitor of a group who returned to Yehud after the exile. Alternate forms of the same name include Ananias (LXX Ανανιάς), which occurs elsewhere in 1 Esd 9:21, 29, 43, 48).

Gerald Bilkes

#### Anniuth

→ Bani

#### Annunciation

- I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- II. New Testament
- III. Christianity
- IV. Islam
- V. Literature
- VI. Visual Arts

#### I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

The Hebrew Bible contains several birth narratives (for a detailed presentation see Finlay). Some of these birth reports start with annunciation scenes.

Such announcements are made to Hagar (Gen 16:11–12), Sarah (Gen 17:15–16; 18:9–15), Rebekah (Gen 25:22–23), Manoah's wife (Judg 13:3–5), the Shunnamite woman (2 Kgs 4:15–16), the house of David (Isa 7:13–17) and to David (1 Chr 22:8–10). The birth announcements are delivered by God himself or by a divine messenger. In most cases they are addressed to barren women to whom a male offspring is promised. The motif of the par-turition of a barren woman or of a miraculous birth may be related to a "birth of the hero" paradigm (Brenner), which is used in order to highlight the exceptional destiny of the announced male offspring. The problem of childlessness, which is resolved by divine intervention, introduces in the Hebrew Bible the birth of exceptional figures. The annunciations of Ishmael, Samson and the ideal king in Isa 7 are very closely related to each other (Humbert; Neff). In these cases the annunciation contains the following elements:

- 1) The announcement of pregnancy and birth (with a specific formula: "behold you (she) have (has) conceived and shall bear a son" using *hīn-nēh, hārā, yālad, bēn*;
- 2) The announcement of the son's name (with the root *qara'*, missing in Judg 13);
- 3) A sentence starting with *kī* and giving some explanation of the child's name;
- 4) A prospective announcing the exceptional destiny of the son.

One might therefore speak of an "annunciation oracle." The social context of this genre (the "Sitz im Leben") was probably the sanctuary where childless women went in order to ask for an oracle and for divine intervention. The story of the barren Hannah may reflect the social setting of the birth oracle. After Hannah's prayer and vow in the Shiloh sanctuary, the priest announces that God has granted her request (1 Sam 1:9–18). The following birth report contains the four elements of the annunciation oracle:

- [1] Hannah conceived and bore a son. [2] She called him Samuel, [3] because 'I have asked him from YHWH' ... [4] 'I will offer him as a nazirite for all time.' (1 Sam 1:20–22)

In the Hagar story (Gen 16) the annunciation oracle comes somewhat late, since Hagar knows already that she is pregnant. The narrator uses the oracle to underline the importance of Ishmael who is paralleled with Samson and the ideal king. He wants to show that YHWH is also the God of Hagar's offspring, the Ishmaelites (Gen 16:11, Römer). In the New Testament, Luke has taken over the annunciation genre in Luke 1. He intended to demonstrate that the oracle of Isaiah, which at his time was understood in messianic sense, was fulfilled with the birth of Jesus from a "virgin."

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Thomas Römer

## II. New Testament

In their accounts of Jesus' birth and infancy, Matt 1:18–25 and Luke 1:11–20, 26–38 display a concern to recapture an Old Testament pattern: (1) God's messenger makes an unexpected appearance. (2) The numinous personage offers reassurance. (3) An unexpected birth is foretold. (4) The meaningful name of the child is given. (5) The future mission or destiny of the hero is stated.

That there can be no question of historical memory behind these passages is clear from the different circumstances of the encounters in the two gospels and the practical impossibility of reconciling their accounts (Zeller: 103). Matthew's apparition is to Joseph in a dream and belongs to a sustained motif of divine guidance of the events Matthew recounts (cf. Matt 2:12–13, 19–20, 22; Brown: 108). The Lukan appearances to Zechariah and Mary occur during waking hours and involve dialogue between the parents-to-be and Gabriel, the *angelus nuntius*, who is manifestly intended to evoke the wondrous "annunciations" of old and their startled recipients.

**1. Matthew.** Although the announcement to Joseph in Matt 1:20–21 incorporates a substantial number of traditional motifs belonging to Old Testament annunciation narratives, it neglects the common objection of the startled parent. This benefits both Joseph's character (Matt 1:19, 24–25) and the dream setting of his encounter.

Matthew attaches to the annunciation one of his characteristic formula-quotations, invoking one of the accommodated uses of our form, Isa 7:14, with its commonplace "behold," the portentous motherhood of a "virgin" (παρθένος) supplied by Isaiah's Greek translator, and the christologically pregnant name Εμμανουήλ, in terms of which Matt 28:20b will ultimately define the age of the church (cf. Brown: 153). The angel's explanation of the unexpected conception as *God's deed* – "of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 1:20c; cf. Luke 1:35) – involves us with *pagan* rather than biblical or post-biblical precedents (Zeller: 100–103). Especially pertinent to Matthew's announcement is the Egyptian and Greco-Roman vein of "fathers' dreams/visions" disclosing the supernatural aspects of an infant hero's birth (ibid., 90–93; e.g., Josephus, *Ant.* ii.9.3–4 §§210–18 [Moses]; Plutarch, *Alex.* 2.1–3.2).

**2. Luke.** Luke 1–2 is arranged as a narrative dip-tych, recounting for both John the Baptist and Je-

sus the sequence of annunciation, birth, naming with 8th-day circumcision, and popular acclamation of the two infants (see esp. Brown: 294–97, 409). The systematic “tilting” of this symmetry in Jesus’ favor is made structurally apparent when the celebratory canticles assigned to Zechariah and Mary have their expected order reversed – Mary’s first in Luke 1:46–55, then Zechariah’s in vv. 68–79 – through the plot device of the latter’s aphasia, imposed on him between the annunciation and the nativity of his son by the angel he questioned (v. 20). The labored parallelism between the two annunciations raises the question of their literary relationship: whether Luke composed one in imitation of the other, and whether his exemplar was Jesus’ (so Brown: 279, 282–85, 293) or John’s (so Radl: 296–97). In either case, it is safe to say that he exploited the step-by-step realization of the Old Testament form in both passages so as to establish the climactic effect of Jesus’ wondrous birth in relation to all those, including John’s, which had been announced in the same way.

In Luke 1:26–38, the angel responds to Mary’s demurring with the confirming sign of her kinswoman’s wondrous pregnancy (vv. 35–36). The sequence of protest, reassurance, and confirming sign belongs to the Old Testament’s vocation scenes rather than to its birth announcements (e.g., Exod 3:10–12 [Moses]; Jer 1:4–10). This has prompted some exegetes (e.g., Stock) to speak of the annunciation as the scenic expression of Mary’s vocation; but this overlooks the fact that the conjoined forms of birth- and calling-announcement overlap in the declaration of the divinely mandated mission, now of a nascent child, now of a commissioned adult. In Luke’s text, this overlap, at vv. 32–33 and v. 35, unmistakably identifies Jesus, Son of David and Son of God, as the central interest of the narrative (Lohfink: 123; Zeller: 99; Radl: 280–81). The argumentative function of the confirming sign is to connect the unprecedented virginal conception by Mary with the familiar pattern of Elizabeth’s natural conception after prolonged sterility. The wonder of Jesus’ birth thus outstrips its biblical precedents but remains in line with them, making the point that God acts where humans cannot in bringing forth a savior. The point of the virginal conception is thus the unassisted sovereignty of divine grace; it has nothing to do with sexual morality. Its connection with the other wondrous births of the biblical tradition is sealed by Gabriel’s final word, “nothing shall be impossible for God” (v. 37), where the echo of the tradition’s fountainhead, God’s rhetorical question directed to Sarah (Gen 18:14), could not be clearer.

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Richard J. Dillon

### III. Christianity

- Greek and Latin Patristics and Orthodox Churches
- Medieval Times and Reformation Era ■ Modern Europe and America

Beginning in the ancient Christian tradition, the meaning of the word *annunciation* has been restricted to signifying the sending of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, when God realized the incarnation of his divine Son (cf. Luke 1:28–38). From then on the term has been used exclusively with this meaning.

#### A. Greek and Latin Patristics and Orthodox Churches

The oldest extra-biblical traditions about the Annunciation survive in the *Prot. Jas.* 11, a mid-2nd-century apocryphon which, although often classed among the so-called “Infancy Gospels,” is in fact a biography of the Virgin Mary from her conception through the birth of Christ. Although the Annunciation episode is significantly more developed in the *Protevangelium of James* than in Luke’s gospel, falling into two distinct scenes, there are signs that the *Protevangelium of James* transmits an early account of the Annunciation that is not dependent on Luke but reflects a parallel tradition that has been harmonized with Luke’s version. In contrast to Luke, which does not specify any location, the *Protevangelium of James* reports that an angel (later identified as Gabriel) appeared to Mary when she had gone forth to draw water from a well. When the angel initially greets her using the same words as in Luke (“Hail, favored one ...”), she is startled, and dropping her pitcher, she rushes home and begins to spin using purple thread. The angel then appears to her a second time indoors, addressing her again as in Luke, “Fear not ...” When she expresses doubts about what she has just heard, her questions concern not her virginity, as in Luke, but rather the possibility of conceiving and giving birth to the living God as an ordinary woman. The angel then continues to explain, again as in Luke, how a power will overshadow her, also describing the significance of him whom she is to bear.

Although the theologians of the 2nd century had not yet developed the sophisticated level of reflection on the nature and person of Mary that would follow in later centuries, her dogmatic importance is already signaled in the Eve-Mary contrast drawn by Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 100) and Irenaeus of Lyons (*Haer.* iii.22.4). In this soteriological comparison, the Annunciation figures prominently

as Mary's obedience and acceptance of the angel's message ("let it be with me according to your word") is contrasted with Eve's disobedience in listening to the serpent's words. Thus, Mary's free response to God's call at the Annunciation had already emerged as a pivotal moment in the process of human redemption by this early stage, and Mary's active obedience as the "New Eve" remained an important theme of early Christian theology.

Patristic interest in the Annunciation begins to increase especially during the 4th century, when several prominent theologians address the tradition from various angles. Gregory of Nyssa, e.g., reads Mary's response to the angel in Luke 1:34 as a sign that she had already taken a vow of virginity (*De nativitate Christi*, PG 46, 1140–41), an idea first expressed in the West by Augustine (*Serm.* 225.2; cf. *Virginit.* 2.4). John Chrysostom explains that the angel came to warn Mary before the divine conception so that she would not think that something was wrong with her and take her own life out of fear of disgrace (*Hom. Matt.* 4.5). Ambrose reads the Annunciation account as evidence of Mary's faithfulness, making her the first to believe in God's redemptive act as well as the first to be redeemed (*Exp. Luc.* 2.17). According to Ambrose, God chose Mary at the Annunciation to be the beginning of God's redemptive work, making her the first to receive "the promised fruit of salvation." Moreover, Ambrose develops a parallel between Mary and Zachariah that is in some ways reminiscent of the earlier Eve-Mary contrast: according to Ambrose, Mary's faithfulness repairs the errors of Zachariah's doubts.

An anonymous homily from the later 4th century attributed to Chrysostom presents an extended commentary on Luke 1:26–35, couched within an anti-Arian polemic (PG 62, 763–70). The homily begins with an intriguing heavenly prologue, in which Christ gives Gabriel extensive instruction before sending him on his mission. The homilist also expands considerably on the angel's words as given by Luke, developing them into elaborate praises of Mary. Moreover, in contrast to what would become the prevailing tradition, this homily describes the divine conception as having already occurred prior to Gabriel's Annunciation. When Mary asked Gabriel how this could happen, he refuses to speculate; other early Christian writers, however, were not so timid.

The Annunciation provided early Christian theologians with an opportunity to reflect on the mechanics of the divine conception: some extraordinary means would have to be discovered that left her virginity intact. Among the first to ponder this miracle seems to have been Ephraem the Syrian, who in his *Commentary on the Diatessaron* 4.15, 20.32 explains that the angel deposited the divine seed in Mary's ear, so that she conceived the Word when

she heard the words, "Hail, favored one ..." Other theologians speculated that Mary may have conceived through her sense of smell, inhaling a holy perfume brought by the angel, or that the angel entered in through her mouth; still others supposed that Mary had conceived through her sight, after beholding a vision of a small child. Nevertheless, by the middle of the 5th century there was a fairly widespread consensus that Mary conceived through her sense of hearing, and this remained a popular theme for later writers. Many, including Ephraem, adapted this notion to the Eve-Mary parallel, so that just as Death entered the world through Eve's ear, by the words of the serpent, Life entered through Mary's ear at the Annunciation.

The early Syriac tradition is particularly rich in expositions of the Annunciation. In the later 5th century, Jacob of Serug devoted a trio of homilies to themes from the Annunciation, in what is perhaps the most sustained and extensive reflection on this topic from the patristic period. Although Jacob consolidates much of the exegesis that had come before him, among his many contributions is a distinction between the actions of the "spirit" and the "power" that have come upon Mary (Luke 1:35): the former refers to the Holy Spirit's initial purification of her womb, while the latter is the Word of God itself who then enters and dwells within her womb. Also of interest is an early Syriac dialogue poem between Mary and the angel, as well as the many other references to the Annunciation in the early Marian hymns collected by Brock. One of the most intriguing of these early Syriac liturgical poems (no. 34) is a hymn attributed to a village potter from north Syria, Simeon the Potter (fl. 500 CE), which makes reference to the Annunciation's commemoration in March, perhaps hinting at the beginnings of a liturgical feast celebrating this event.

The feast of the Annunciation is not attested prior to the 6th century. The earliest evidence for its celebration is a homily composed for this occasion in the early 6th century by Abraham of Ephesus. Around the same time, Romanos the Melode also composed a hymn for the feast of the feast of the Annunciation in Constantinople. Commemoration of the Annunciation was formally established in the East on 25 March by the emperor Justinian. Correspondence survives from Justinian to the church of Jerusalem in 561, directing that the celebration of the Nativity be moved from 6 January to 25 December and, correspondingly, that the Annunciation should be observed on 25 March. There is, however, some evidence to suggest that the date of the Nativity depends on the date of the Annunciation, rather than vice-versa, and that the 25 March date was chosen because it falls approximately six months after the traditional date of John the Baptist's conception (23 September). The same date (25



March) was also traditionally identified with the day of the Crucifixion, making Christ's conception and death to coincide. The feast of the Annunciation passed rather quickly into the West, where it became established by the later 7th century.

The Annunciation is a very common subject in Christian art, and as is often the case, the *Protevangelium's* apocryphal version of the Annunciation was particularly influential on its artistic representation. The earliest images of the Annunciation survive in the Roman catacombs, including two frescos most likely painted during the 3rd century. Neither of these images, however, betrays clear influence from either Luke's or the *Protevangelium's* account of the Annunciation. The earliest representation revealing inspiration from the *Protevangelium's* apocryphal account appears on a sarcophagus lid from the early 4th century, after which point the *Protevangelium's* influence on Christian art becomes widespread. The motif of the *conceptio per aurem* is also particularly common in artistic representations of the Annunciation.

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## B. Medieval Times and Reformation Era

The list of the medieval theologians and exegetes who had recourse to the account of the Annunciation would be numerous indeed. This situation is quite understandable because of the fundamental significance of the Lukan passage both for Christology and Marian doctrine. Therefore it is not surprising that the account of the Annunciation to Mary became one of the most frequently exploited pages of the Gospel of Luke and would be quoted throughout the entire Marian literature, either to support theological truths or exhort and encourage the faithful in the practice of their Christian life.

The contents more frequently evoked are the real incarnation of the Son of God, Mary's divine motherhood and virginity, her reactions to the message of the angel, and especially her obedience and humility.

During the Middle Ages, however, the progress of biblical exegesis and theological reflection contributed to an ever richer interpretation of Luke's account, which was understood within the frame-

work of other similar events that explained the unity of God's plan for the salvation of humankind.

Following this hermeneutic line, some biblical events were considered a kind of annunciation, even though the term itself was not applied to them. It may be the case of the apparition of God to Abraham in order to foretell Isaac's birth (Gen 17:16–22.; 18:10), or the message brought by an angel to Manoah and his wife to let them know about the coming birth of their son Samson (Judg 13:3–14).

Two prophecies announcing the future birth of the Messiah are especially significant. In these circumstances there was no angel appearing but God chose to proclaim the event through the voice of a prophet. Isaiah prophesied about a child to be born of a virgin and called Immanuel, because he was to be God-with-us (Isa 7:14). The same event was announced by the prophet Jeremiah who proclaimed that the Lord should "raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely" (Jer 23:5). The New Testament reports the apparition of the angel Gabriel to Zachariah in order to inform him about the birth of John the Baptist which is directly connected with Jesus' birth (Luke 1:11–20).

These happenings were understood as prophetic symbols and forewarnings by which the Lord intended to prepare his people for the birth par excellence, namely that of the Son of God. In his divine person the messianic promises would reach their final and perfect fulfillment. For this reason the medieval commentators of the account of the Annunciation maintained that such a great event deserved to be emphasized and in their hermeneutical commentaries they devoted a great deal of attention to Luke's page.

Besides, it has to be noted that the account of the Annunciation continued to be proclaimed as the main reading during the eucharistic celebration for the Feast of the Annunciation. This feast was already introduced into the liturgical calendar of the church in the patristic period together with other Marian feasts and from then on was celebrated everywhere in the church both in the East and in the West. Preachers used to take inspiration from the Lukan reading for their homiletic commentaries, following a custom which during the course of many centuries had already become a regular praxis in the writings of the church fathers.

The Gospel of the Annunciation was frequently taken up as a favorite subject in monastic preaching as well. A famous example is the set of four homilies composed by Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153) and known under the title *De laudibus Virginis Matris* or homilies *Super missus est* (Cf. text in Leclercq 1966: 13–58). Commenting on the Gospel of the Annunciation, St. Bernard is aware of the fundamental significance of this scriptural page and avails him-

self of the opportunity of explaining the dogmas of Jesus' divinity and consequently of Mary's divine motherhood, coloring the Lukan text through his theological depth and intense spirituality. The monk of Clairvaux went back to the same pericope in his two sermons composed for the Feast of the Annunciation (Leclerq 1968: 13–34). As a forerunner and master, Bernard of Clairvaux inspired many authors of later centuries who followed his footsteps by themselves elaborating sermons on the Annunciation, moved by the consideration that the Incarnation of the Son of God is the central event in salvation history.

In the Eve-Mary parallelism, Luke's account was again and again interpreted as the opposite term of Gen 3. Amadeus of Lausanne (d. 1159), for instance, recalls this classic theme and explains that Mary became the main collaborator of Jesus Christ in the work of salvation in the same way as Eve collaborated with Adam in committing sin. Therefore the mother Eve brought death to all human beings because of her prevarication, whereas the mother Mary through her faith and obedience was appointed by God to distribute life by conceiving Jesus Christ who is himself the source of grace and life (*Homily II*, SC 72, 80). The cistercian monk Alan of Lille (d. ca. 1203) in his commentary on the Song of Songs tries to illustrate all the events of Mary's life in the light of the mystery of the Annunciation (Cf. *In Canticum Canticorum*, ch. 1, PL 210, 53–54; ch. 2, 65). Anthony of Padua (d. 1231), in a homily on the Annunciation underlines the uniqueness of the link that Mary acquired with her divine Son in the very moment of the Annunciation, when she came in touch with the mystery of God in an unimaginable way (1979: vol. 2, 109). According to the Franciscan Ubertino of Casale (d. after 1325), Mary's special relationship with God, caused by the event of the Annunciation, is not restricted to the divine person of her Son, but is also extended to the other two Trinitarian persons (Cf. *Arbor vitae* 1, 11, anastatic reprint 1961, p. 45, col. 2).

The theologians of the early reformation period showed no difficulty in their hermeneutic reading of the Lukan text. Their thought continued in the same line as the medieval tradition. John Oeclampadius (d. 1531) believed that Jesus' conception was the fruit of a Trinitarian intervention in Mary when she received the message of the angel (1983: 52). M. Luther (d. 1546) stressed Mary's faith on the occasion of the Annunciation as a necessary requirement to becoming the Mother of God (WA 2: 15). Opposing the traditional translation of Luke's expression *gratia plena*, namely, full of grace, Luther introduced into his German translation of the Bible the word *gracious*, believing that this expression was more understandable for simple people. Philip Melancthon (d. 1560) maintained that the descent of the Holy Spirit into Mary was a proof of the virginal conception of Jesus (1990: 572).

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### C. Modern Europe and America

Interpretations of the Annunciation since the 16th century have reflected post-Reformation Protestant and Catholic theological divisions about the role and significance of Mary. Recently, this theological divide has begun to be bridged by historical-critical analysis of the biblical texts, leading to post-Vatican II reassessment of Mary's role within Roman Catholicism and Protestant interest in reclaiming this central figure of Christian faith.

In response to medieval excesses in Marian devotion, Luther insisted on the secondary importance of Mary and the sole mediatorship of Christ. Nevertheless, she was never completely rejected by Luther. In a sermon on the Annunciation (1527), he sees Mary's response to the angelic visitation as emblematic of the faith-filled response to God's call and as the rejection of human reason. He continued to hold to the doctrine of Mary's virginity and, initially at least, wanted to retain the feast of the Annunciation because of its christological significance (Graef). As post-Reformation polemics hardened, the later reformers increasingly rejected Mary as symbolic of the abuses of Catholicism, while Mary became increasingly central to Roman Catholic piety.

The ecumenical text *Mary in the New Testament* (1978), sponsored by the US Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue, epitomized the beginning of new and more collaborative approaches towards assessing the biblical picture of Mary and particularly of the Annunciation. We will focus here on the Lukan annunciation since that has been the source of most Marian theology. The scholars involved in the aforementioned project agreed on the literary character of the Lukan Annunciation scene as embedded in his infancy narrative. They discounted previous theories that understood it as part of an historical memoir of Mary. They also called attention to the christological import of the scene, focusing on the future importance of Jesus. They noted that the scene follows a pattern typical of Old Testament annunciations concerning figures destined

for great roles in salvation history and likely reflects post-resurrection faith; what the church came to believe about Jesus in light of the resurrection was regarded as true from the beginning. This task force believed that both Luke and Matthew assumed a virginal conception with God as the creative (though not sexual) partner. It was suggested that Mary's positive response to the angel symbolizes the faith-filled response of the true disciple and prefigures her appearance in Acts 1, where she is pictured among the gathered disciples on Pentecost.

Ecumenical biblical scholarship such as this opened the door to new and less divisive approaches to Mary that recognized the Lukan Annunciation text as primarily christological and focused on the theme of discipleship that emerges from Mary's response to the angel – not unlike Luther.

The Second Vatican Council, in its Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, depicts Mary's response to the angel as the faithful obedience that should be characteristic of all Christian disciples. As a model of the church, Mary lived a life overshadowed by the Spirit from the time of the Annunciation to her death. Her response to the angel was not merely passive, but active participation in the work of salvation.

Feminist theologians have taken up this theme of Mary's active participation in the dialogue with the angel and note that the images of women sometimes drawn from traditional interpretations of the Annunciation have often not served women well. Mary's obedient consent has been proposed as justification for a passive and subordinate role for women in both church and society. Feminist theologians point out that the true disciple, whether male or female, can model himself or herself on Mary's active, dialogical, and participative consent. Mary's virginity has also marginalized sexually-active women who have often been relegated to second class status in Christian history. Some feminist theologians are looking again at Mary's virginity, seeing it within the context of its time as a liberating possibility for women, agents of their own lives rather than dependent upon men.

As a plethora of recent works attest, Protestant Christianity since the late 20th century has also reawakened an interest in this central figure of Christian faith. While continuing to have reservations about the Marian dogmatic tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, lines of convergence and retrieval can be found in the scriptural testimony. Most follow the lines of interpretation set forth in *Mary in the New Testament*. Tim Perry, in *Mary for Evangelicals* (2006), concludes his analysis of the Lukan Annunciation text thus:

She will be the Lord's slave, she will conceive in social stigma, bear a son, name him Jesus and embark upon

an uncertain future with an inauspicious beginning. It is God's plan. (73)

Protestant interpretations often characterize Mary as the chosen one, perhaps reflecting the doctrine of election.

An agreed statement of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (2005: "Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ"), sees the virginal conception as "a sign of the presence and work of the Spirit." It further notes the faith and freedom of Mary's response.

Orthodox theologian Kyriaki Karidoyanes Fitzgerald draws five theological insights about Mary, important to the Orthodox tradition, from the scriptural narrative of the Annunciation (see Braaten/Jenson 80–99):

- 1) Theocentricity (affirmed through Mary's de-centering of herself and reliance upon God in her response to the angel);
- 2) Freedom (demonstrated in the exercise of Mary's free will in her response (she could have said no);
- 3) Humility;
- 4) Collaboration with God;
- 5) The value of relationship, with God and with neighbor (witnessed by her visit to her cousin Elizabeth).

Fitzgerald sounds the Orthodox theme that all theology is rooted in scripture and primarily expressed through liturgical services and prayer. She joins many of the directions already noted when she emphasizes Mary's election and faithful discipleship.

There are clear lines of convergence in recent interpretations of the Annunciation. They are largely made possible because of the ecumenical biblical scholarship undertaken from the mid-20th century onwards.

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Mary E. Hines

#### IV. Islam

The Qur'an contains several versions of announcement stories that are also found in the Bible. Along with the annunciation of the conception and nativity of Christ to Mary there are also announcements of the conception and birth of a son to Abraham and Sarah and of John the Baptist (Yaḥya) to Zechariah. In addition, the Qur'an narrates an announce-

ment to Moses' mother of his future significance just after she has given birth to him, and a prophetic statement from Jesus announcing the future coming of the prophet Muḥammad.

The announcement of a son to Abraham and Sarah comes in S 11:69–73, 15:53, 37:101 and 37:112. He is named as Isaac in S 37:112, but the narrative is more detailed in S 15:51–55, where Abraham is visited by strangers who announce good news of a son. He responds in some disbelief, “are you giving me good news that old age has taken hold of me? Then what is your good news?” They assure him of the truth of their announcement and Abraham expresses trust in the “mercy of his Lord.” In S 11:69–73, the announcement is made to Abraham's wife by God's messengers. She stands laughing when they announce the good news of Isaac and of Jacob after him, protesting that she and her husband are too old to have a child, but the messengers exclaim, “Are you surprised at God's decision?”

These texts emphasize the power of God to create life when human circumstances do not permit, along with the need for humans to believe in and submit to God. Abraham verbalizes faith in the announcement, showing that uncertainty gives way to firm belief once the message is fully understood. The narrative about the announcement to Sarah shows how the faith of the mother of the miraculous son is just as important to the outworking of God's will as the faith of the father.

The announcement of a son to Zechariah comes at S 3:38–41 and 19:7, but the version of the narrative in S 3:38–41 is more detailed. While Zechariah is praying for a child, angels call to him, “God gives you good news of Yahyā, testifying to the truth of a word from God.” They add that Yahyā will be one of God's prophets, to which Zechariah complains that he is too old and his wife is barren. But finally he relents, “Let it be so, God does what he wills.”

Muslim commentators have focused on the meaning here of “a word from God.” Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373) explains that the title was given to Yahyā because he was the first to believe in Jesus and his mission. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) takes the phrase to mean that Yahyā was created by a word from God.

This annunciation of Yahyā does not include details of his future work as a prophet, but as with the annunciation of Abraham's son, the emphasis is on the power of God to overcome seemingly natural impossibilities, along with his boundless mercy to those who are in need.

The announcement of Jesus' conception and birth to Mary is narrated twice. S 19:16–21 describes Mary being visited by an angel who appeared like a human being to her. She expresses fear, but he reassures her saying, “I am a messenger

from your Lord to give you a pure boy.” Mary protests her virginity, but the angel tells her that the gift of the boy is not difficult for God who intends that the boy should be a sign of his mercy for humanity. S 3:45–49 tells of angels saying to Mary, “God gives you good news of a word from him; his name is the Messiah, Jesus, Mary's son; esteemed in this world and the next; among those closest to God.” When Mary proclaims her chastity, she is told, “God creates what he wills. When he decides (to create) something, he only says ‘Be’ and it exists.” God's plan is to instruct Jesus in the Torah that Moses had been given, and to give him the Gospel, so that he will be a messenger to the children of Israel.

Muslim exegetes have discussed the identity of the angels who appear in these accounts, and the process of the conception. While there has been agreement that it was Gabriel who made the announcement, there has been little consensus on the manner of conception, apart from the fact that no human father was involved. The interpretation of “a word from him” has been more straightforward, since in S 3:47 the angel reports that Jesus is to be created by a word from God, “Be.”

Two annunciations mentioned in the Qur'an are not related in the Bible. S 28:7 tells how the mother of Moses is encouraged not to be afraid after giving birth to him because he will be one of God's messengers. There is a parallel with the Qur'anic annunciation of Jesus to Mary here, because Moses and Jesus would both bring revealed “books” to the Jews. It is striking that the announcements of the future prophetic roles of Moses and Jesus are made to their mothers, showing the importance of submissive trust in God on the part of humans whom God chooses to fulfill his will.

S 61:6 reports Jesus announcing the coming of a messenger “whose name is Aḥmad,” and there is agreement among Muslims that Aḥmad is the prophet Muḥammad, since the two names have the same meaning, “praised.” Muslims have often interpreted Jesus' promise of the Paraclete in John 14:16 as his prophecy of Muḥammad's coming.

The stories of the announcement of the birth of Abraham's son, of Yahyā, and of Jesus all contain reactions of disbelief followed by submissive faith on the part of Abraham and Sarah, Zechariah and Mary. In each case, normal human conception is unexpected, and faith in the miraculous power of God is essential. What God wills he performs, but he also calls particular people to witness to the performance of his will.

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Mark Beaumont

## V. Literature

The brief but remarkable Luke 1:26–38 has prompted the creation of countless pictorial and literary representations in many cultural contexts down through the centuries.

As the Christian church developed, the Annunciation became a subject for serious theological reflection. Much of the visual iconography usually associated with the event comes from the apocryphal *Protevangeliium* (ca. 150 CE). After the issue of the “*Theotokos*” of Mary was resolved at the Council of Ephesus in 431, Marian devotion increased significantly. Works referring to the Annunciation burgeoned accordingly. When he was just a young abbot, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) published a series of sermons based on this event, entitled *Super missus est* (a work which Martin Luther later critically discussed).

The Old English poem, “christ,” by Cynewulf, makes passing reference to the Annunciation. Many Middle English lyrics refer to it as well, as do the cycles of Mystery plays (the N-Town cycle being a good example). It is also included in Chaucer’s poem entitled *An A.B.C.* This poem, translated from the French of Guillaume de Deguileville, is a song of praise to the Virgin Mary, each stanza commencing with a new letter of the alphabet. The stanza beginning with “P” states; “Purpos I have sum tyme for t’enquere, / Wherefore and why the Holy Gost thee soughte, / Whan Gabrielles vois cam to thyn ere.” The popular medieval carol concerning the Annunciation, *Angelus ad Virginem*, is alluded to in “The Miller’s Tale,” by Chaucer, when Nicholas sings it in Latin.

In John Donne’s *La Corona* (1633) the Annunciation is the subject of one of the chaplet of poems. Likewise, in Robert Southwell’s *The Sequence on the Virgin Mary and Christ*, there is one section, *The Virgins salutation*, that alludes to this angelic visitation. There are similar references in J. Milton and A. Pope.

Throughout the Victorian period and the early part of the 20th century, the Annunciation was consistently the subject of poetic works, including Felicia Dorothea Hemans’ *The Annunciation*. It is also alluded to in many other poems, such as *Ave*, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1847), *The Blessed Virgin Compared to the Air We Breathe* (1883), by Hopkins, and poems of Tennyson and W. Blake. *Ave Maria Gratia Plena* (1878), by Oscar Wilde, is a beautifully written sonnet which ironically contrasts Greco-Roman deities with the stillness and simplicity of the biblical narrative.

In the first half of the 20th century there were some equally serious poetic treatments of this sub-

ject. Rupert Brooke’s *Mary and Gabriel* (1912) is worthy of note, as is *The Annunciation*, by Edwin Muir, a poem with the same title by Joyce Kilmer, and *The Mother of God* (1933) by W. B. Yeats. R. M. Rilke’s *Das Marienleben (The Life of the Virgin Mary)* (1913) predictably includes a section on the Annunciation. Thomas Merton’s Marian poetry includes several specific, highly devotional poems, including *Aubade: The Annunciation* (1946) and *The Annunciation* (1957).

Many modern Christian poets have made the Annunciation the subject of their work. North American poets such as Kathleen Norris, Luci Shaw, Madeleine L’Engle, David Craig and Andrew Hudgins are amongst them. *Mysteries of the Incarnation: ‘She Said Yeah’*, by Kathleen Norris, is a meditation on the *Angelus*, set at a Benedictine monastery on the Great Plains. Luci Shaw keeps returning to the subject, and her individually published poems *Magnificat*, *The Labor of Angels*, *Advent Visitation*, *Announcement*, *Virgin, Too Much to Ask*, *Made Flesh*, *The Annunciatory Angel*, ‘... for who can endure the day of his coming?’ and *The Overshadow* have all dealt with this subject over a period of several decades. *O Simplicitas* and *After Annunciation*, by Madeleine L’Engle, are other good examples of a modern response, as are *Annunciation*, by David Craig and *The Cestello Annunciation*, by Andrew Hudgins.

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Peter Stiles

## VI. Visual Arts

**1. Description of Normative Figure of the Annunciation in the Visual Arts.** The “Annunciation” in art refers above all to the announcement to Mary of her election to be mother of the Christ. Other biblical and apocryphal annunciations are sometimes portrayed: the annunciation to the shepherds of Christ’s birth; to Abraham of the birth of Isaac; to Zechariah of the birth of John the Baptist; to Joachim and to Anne of the birth of Mary. There are also portrayals of the annunciation of the death of Mary to her and to the apostles. Here we are concerned with the primary sense: the Annunciation to Mary of the birth of the Messiah. Representations normally involve the figures of Mary and the angel Gabriel in dialogue. Some representations (originally and more commonly in the East)

include a prelude in heaven, in which God or the Trinity (seen in Byzantine art as three men seated on a throne) elects Gabriel as the divine emissary. Eastern art also preserves the apocryphal tradition of two “annunciations.” In the first, Mary stands outdoors at a well, or sometimes at a spring of water springing from a rock (parallel to portrayals of Moses striking the rock in Exod 17:6). The angel (which according to the texts is invisible to her) is sometimes portrayed in small scale. In the second Mary is indoors, holding a skein of purple thread she is spinning for the veil of the temple, as the angel appears in visible form. In Western art, Mary is commonly represented indoors, generally seated or kneeling, and is frequently shown with a book. The angel is typically outdoors, either standing or kneeling facing Mary; occasionally he is shown walking or flying toward Mary, sometimes entering the house through a window. The winged Gabriel frequently wears a white robe, and sometimes (as announcer of the gospel) a deacon’s dalmatic and stole. Parts of his clothing may swirl as though in a wind, even though the figure’s pose is stationary. In medieval scenes he is generally alone, but in Renaissance painting he is sometimes joined by one or even two angels, and in Counter-Reformation art he appears on a heavenly cloud, accompanied by a great choir of heavenly beings who come to glorify the Incarnation.

**2. Attribute and/or Symbol.** The primary visual symbol of the Annunciation is a portrayed dialogue: a gesture of speech by the angel and a gesture of response by Mary. In the East, the angel is generally on the right; the opposite is usually true in Western representations. Sometimes Gabriel’s words (usually reduced to the greeting “Ave Maria”) are included in the picture; less frequently also Mary’s. The inclusion of text is especially frequent in 14th- and 15th-century Germany. In some cases the angel’s greeting appears on a scroll it holds, or on a band encircling his staff; in some the words occupy the space between the figures. Gabriel makes a rhetorical gesture (often a finger of one hand raised) indicating speech; more rarely he points to Mary. Infrequently he gestures toward Mary and also upward toward heaven.

In many medieval and Renaissance pictures, the person of God the Father (or the divine hand alone) is seen emitting rays of light directed at Mary and sending the Spirit upon her in the form of a dove. The rays may extend toward Mary’s ear (conception of the Word) or toward her womb. Sometimes the Christ child is seen descending to her, occasionally bearing a cross. (Byzantine art sometimes portrays the child already in her womb.)

Other symbols include a herald’s staff (in earlier portrayals) or (from the 14th century onward) a lily (alternatively, an olive or palm branch, especially in Sienese painting) held by Gabriel (the first example

seems to be in Duccio’s *Maestà*, 1308–11). The lily plant often contains one flower and two buds, symbolizing virginity before Christ’s birth (the flower), in birth, and after (the buds – at the time of the Annunciation, still to be realized). Simone Martini’s painting (1333; see → plate 4), an early example of an altarpiece dedicated to the theme, places between the figures a vase of lilies, symbolizing Mary’s purity. This becomes a standard feature in many subsequent representations, especially in northern Europe. Rarely the angel holds a cross which he presents to Mary. Renaissance paintings introduced a host of secondary christological or mariological symbols, e.g., a ray of light coming through a window or a stoppered flask of clear water (symbols of virginal conception and birth); the peacock (for immortality); an apple (symbolizing the Fall and its reversal); the stork and the swallow (especially in northern Europe), harbingers of spring and hence symbols of rebirth; a fleeing black cat (the devil defeated); and occasionally various flowers. In late medieval/early renaissance art the Annunciation/Incarnation was allegorically represented in the myth of the unicorn: Gabriel and the angels are the hunters who drive the unicorn, representing the Son, to take refuge in the lap of a virgin. In post-Tridentine art this allegory was forbidden.

**3. Scriptural Episodes of the Annunciation in the Visual Arts.** Eastern portrayals often contain elements from the apocrypha, notably the *Protevangelium of James*, the *Gospel of the Nativity of the Virgin*, and the *Armenian Book of the Infancy*. In the West, influenced by Jerome’s rejection of the apocrypha, the Lucan account (Luke 1:26–38) is generally normative, although apocryphal details like the skein of thread or an attendant to Mary are sometimes present. On the other hand, Western versions contain frequent explicit or implied references to Isa 7:14 (“Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son”) and to Gen 3 (the fall), and sometimes to the annunciation to Abraham of the birth of Isaac (Gen 18:9–15).

**4. Frequent Iconographic Motifs of the Annunciation in the Visual Arts.** The Annunciation is one of the most popular subjects in Christian art. Frescos in the catacombs of Priscilla, and of Marcellinus and Peter have been interpreted as portraying the scene. It is normally found on Byzantine iconostases on two panels at the entrance to the sanctuary, with Gabriel and Mary (with the purple thread in one hand) facing each other. In the West, the scene is found early in church mosaics and apse frescos, and later in frequent altarpieces, either as a panel in a series (sometimes surrounding a Madonna and Child) or as the main theme. In the Renaissance, it became the motif of many independent canvases.

Early representations focus on the passage in Luke, often in conjunction with other events of sal-

vation history. Very early, Mary's acceptance of the Annunciation became identified with the moment of the Incarnation (hence the feast was celebrated nine months before the Nativity) and thus also with the beginning of Christ's work of redemption. Some ancient traditions held that it occurred on the same date as the creation of humanity, the fall, and the crucifixion. Allusions to all these associations can be found in medieval and Renaissance art, so that representations of the Annunciation frequently have multiple levels of theological significance.

The history of representations shows shifts in theological emphases. In early portrayals, the angel's status as God's messenger is emphasized; Mary is the passive receiver of the message. Frequently the angel is portrayed outside, in the light, while Mary is within, in darkness. In early Syrian representations, imitated throughout the East and also in some early Gothic art, Mary rises to meet the angel; in other Western portrayals she kneels before the angel; most commonly she is seated, as in early Greek manuscripts illuminations.

In the Middle Ages there is increasing emphasis on Mary's active role in salvation. Her *fiat* becomes the primary focus of the representation. Frequently the angel kneels before her; the picture presumes what the viewer knows, that Mary is queen of heaven and earth. Mary's reaction to the angel's message varies. In Simone Martini's celebrated altarpiece, she appears to recoil, emphasizing her initial reaction: "she was deeply disturbed by these words." (According to St. Bernard, "she was troubled, as befitted her virginal modesty"). In other portrayals, she makes a rhetorical gesture of questioning or of surprise, with extended hand; in yet others, she crosses her arms on her breast in token of humble acquiescence. (But from the 15th century onwards, it is frequently the angel who crosses his arms in humility before Mary). The motif of Mary kneeling before the angel occasionally appears even in later medieval art (e.g., in Giotto's 1305 fresco in the Arena chapel). *The Meditations of Pseudo-Bonaventure*, which were influential on 14th-century art, specify that Mary knelt and joined her hands while saying "Behold the handmaid of the Lord."

The medieval shift of emphasis to Mary's response corresponds to a stress on the event of the Incarnation of the Word. The portrayal of the descending dove representing the Spirit creates a direct visual connection from God to Mary. From about 1300, rays descending from God also may contain the figure of the Christ child, sometimes carrying a cross. (Such portrayals were eventually discouraged, because they could suggest that Christ did not take his human form from Mary).

The Incarnation in turn is associated with redemption from the Fall, and the angel's "Ave" to

Mary with the reversal of the name "Eva." This theme is often presented in medieval and especially Renaissance paintings by a portrayal of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise in the background, and in statuary sometimes by a small bas relief below the Annunciation scene. The curse of work (Gen 3:16–19) was often represented in the Middle Ages by the figure of Eve spinning; its reversal is implied in Western art in the general rejection of the apocryphal motif of Mary's doing manual labor (drawing water or spinning cloth for the temple). Instead, she is usually portrayed reading or praying (although more exceptionally the motif of the spindle is also present).

From some of the earliest representations through the 14th century, the Annunciation scene sometimes includes a woman in the background observing the event from behind a curtain. She is one of the servants of Mary mentioned in the apocrypha, and she functions as a visual reference to Sarah listening to the annunciation of the birth of Isaac to Abraham (Gen 18:9–15).

The setting of the scene is variable. In many manuscript illuminations, the figures are abstracted from any concrete location. Early Byzantine art sometimes included in the background the basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth. Medieval Western paintings may represent a room in a house, but only with the 15th century does architecture begin to be portrayed with perspectival realism. In Italian Renaissance art the setting may be a cloister or palace; in France, a church or chapel. In the north, a Gothic-style bedroom is portrayed, with a prie-Dieu at which Mary is seated. In Flemish Renaissance paintings the scene often appears in a homely setting. Counter-Reformation art sometimes sets the event within a realistic rendering of the "Holy House of Loretto," supposedly transferred from Nazareth in 1291.

Catholic Baroque paintings of the Counter-Reformation era have a strongly mariological focus. Mary is shown in idealized form, stressing her role in salvation as well as her beauty. While Mary's attitude stresses her humility and submission to God, the scene is one of glory and majesty. Modern religious painting generally follows the classical iconography, but sometimes with increased naturalism in portraying the psychological reaction of Mary as an adolescent girl.

**Works:** ■ *Apocryphal Annunciation*: Byzantine ivory, 6th cent., Treasury of cathedral of Milan; Byzantine mosaics, 11th cent., at Daphni, and in Hagia Sofia in Kiev; Mosaic, St. Mark's, 11th cent., Venice; Ivory casket, 11th cent., Werden; Mosaics of Palatine Chapel, 12th cent., Palermo; Pala d'oro, 12th cent., St. Mark's, Venice; Mosaic of Chora, 14th cent., Istanbul. ■ *Lukan Annunciation*: Mosaic, triumphal arch, 432–40, Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome; Icon, 12th cent., Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow; Manuscript illumination, 1120s, St. Albans Psalter, St Godehard's Church, Hildesheim; Stone sculpture, ca. 1225, Cathedral, Amiens; Stone



Fig. 4 Annunciation to Mary, Reims cathedral (ca. 1232)

Sculpture, ca. 1232, Cathedral, Reims; Pietro Cavallini, mosaic, 1291) Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome; Duccio di Buoninsegna, panel from the *Maestà*, 1308–11, National Gallery, London; Simone Martini, Annunciation Altarpiece, 1333, Uffizi, Florence; Lorenzetti, tempera painting, 1344, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena; Fra Angelico, Annunciation altarpieces, 1430s, S. Maria delle Grazie, S. Giovanni Valdarno; 1430–32, Museo del Prado, Madrid; 1433–34, Museo Diocesano, Cortona; van Eyck, ca. 1435, oil painting, Washington, D.C., National Gallery; Memling, 1480–89, Metropolitan Museum, N.Y.; Correggio, 1525, Galleria Nazionale, Parma; Caravaggio, 1608–9, Musée des Beaux Arts, Nancy; Murillo, 1675, Museum of Seville and Wallace collection, London; Poussin, 1657, National Gallery, London; della Valle, bas relief, 1750, S. Ignazio, Rome; Goya, 1785, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass.; Rossetti, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, 1848–49, and *Ecce Ancilla Domini!*, 1850, Tate Gallery, London; Bouguereau, 1888, private collection; Burne-Jones, 1876–79, Lady Lever Gallery, Liverpool; Waterhouse, 1914, Sotheby's Collection.

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Richard R. Viladesau

## Annunus

The name (LXX Ἀννοῦνος) of a priest or Levite that occurs in some versions of 1 Esd 8:47 (ET 8:48). As Ezra is preparing to lead the exiles back to Jeru-

salem, he realizes that he lacks both priests and Levites and thus needs to recruit these crucial temple functionaries from local families (1 Esd 8:42–46). Among those recruited, at least according to some manuscripts, is Hashabiah and Annunus and his brother Jeshaiah, all sons of Hananiah (1 Esd 8:47; ET 8:48). None of these three names is present in Codex Vaticanus or in the Ethiopic tradition. Annunus is also missing from the corresponding section of Ezra (8:19), where the list of recruited Levites (there is no mention of recruiting priests as in 1 Esd) includes Hashabiah and Jeshaiah but not Annunus.

Shane Berg

## Anointed, The

→Messiah

## Anointing

- I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- II. Judaism
- III. New Testament
- IV. Christianity
- V. Visual Arts

### I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

The act of anointing (Heb. *māšāḥ*) involves rubbing, smearing, or sprinkling someone or something, usually with an oil. Olive oil was the most commonly used substance for such purposes in ancient Israel. Anointing typically denoted the divine consecration of a person (such as a king: 1 Sam 16:12–13), an object (such as the tabernacle and its furnishings: Exod 40:9), or a place (such as a sanctuary or worship site: Gen 31:13; Dan 9:24). The anointing signaled a change in status, identity, office or purpose and involved being set apart in service to the divine. Anointing could also simply refer to the application of perfumed oil to one's own body as an adornment. In such cases, anointing was associated with cleanliness, festivity, or luxury (2 Sam 12:20; Ruth 3:3; Ps 23:5; 45:8; 2 Sam 14:2; Amos 6:6).

Most often in the Hebrew Bible, anointing was associated with the inaugural rites of choosing and installing a king. Royal anointing was most often performed by an authoritative figure, such as a prophet or a priest (1 Kgs 1:34). Anointing extended to several other offices and entities as well. Moses was charged with anointing his brother Aaron as high priest (Exod 28:41). God instructed Moses to prepare an exquisite mixture of scented spices and oils in order to anoint the cultic objects within the tabernacle in which God's presence would dwell among the Israelites (Exod 30:26). God commanded Elijah to anoint the younger Elisha as the prophet who would succeed him (1 Kgs 19:6). The ancestor Jacob anointed the rock at