

## Thought for the Day

*Thought for the day is based on one of the day's lectionary readings.*

*For the Bible online, go to: <http://bible.oremus.org/>*

*Choose your version (we use NRSV in church)*

*Copy and paste the reference into the search box and the passage will be displayed.*

Wednesday 25th March

Feast of the Annunciation

Luke 1.26-38

I think it was Gerard Hughes who coined the phrase 'God of Surprises' for his book in 1985. Or perhaps his publisher came up with it! Anyway it's a brilliant phrase and how very true. I imagine the Blessed Virgin Mary would agree with the thought on that day when Gabriel made his earth-shattering annunciation. Scripture does not record a dropped jaw or awe-struck gasp or any such reaction, and yet surely she must have been utterly dumbfounded. Not so much that she could not give her consent, though. Her world was turned upside down in a moment. But she said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word'.

If you were in the Cathedral on Christmas Day last year at the 9am All Age Eucharist, you might remember the little sketch of the conversation between God and the angels, as God outlines the plan for the Incarnation. As each extra-ordinary detail is revealed, the youngest, keenest angel squeaks 'Brilliant! They won't be expecting that!'

Our God is indeed a God of surprises. As Isaiah puts it 'Behold I am doing a new thing, now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?' (Is 43.19). God does not get stuck in a rut – or imprisoned by routine – or confined by convention. In every situation God the Holy Spirit is infinitely adaptable to work out our redemption.

None of us could have foreseen our current circumstances a few months ago. Our world is being turned upside down and we cannot foresee even now all the implications and the outcomes. We are painfully aware of how little we are in control. It's a time to remember our God of surprises and that creative power of the Holy Spirit to bring life, love and goodness to birth even in the midst of pain, struggle and death.

'Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel, God with us.' (Is 7.14)

*Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort, knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*