

Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. By these words we profess the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ. In the Second Article of the Creed we have considered the mystery of the Incarnation; in the third we set forth the manner in which this mystery was accomplished.

The Son of God, willing to become man for us, was born of a virgin, of the Virgin Mary, taking to Himself human nature in her chaste womb by the power of the Holy Ghost. This is what we declare by these words: Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. This great event was accomplished on the twenty-fifth day of March, 1BC, the fortieth year of the reign of Caesar Augustus at Rome, and the twenty-fifth of that of Herod in Judea.

In the days of Herod the King of Judea, says St. Luke, the Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin whose name was Mary (St. Luke. i. 26, 27). We commemorate this mystery on the feast of the Annunciation, the twenty-fifth day of March. Then, as the Gospel expresses it, the Word was made flesh / that is to say, the Son of God was made man in the virginal womb of Mary.

But, you may ask, could He not have become man otherwise than by being born? Most assuredly He could: it was within His power to form for Himself an adult body, and to appear on earth as a perfect man, as in the beginning was created and placed in the terrestrial paradise the father of the human race. But He did not so will. Choosing to be our true Brother, like unto us in all things, He humbled Himself by taking a body in the womb of a Virgin, though His conception and His birth were miraculous.

What glory, my dear brethren, what glory for the human race to have had such a child! But also how ardent should be our love for Jesus Christ, who so loved us as to become our Brother! For he is our Brother and our flesh (Gen. xxxvii. 27). How base, how low, our ingratitude when we offend Him by sin!