



The Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth stands on the spot celebrated as Mary's childhood home and where the angel Gabriel announced that she would be the mother of Jesus. When we visited the Holy Land, this was my favorite site. Specifically, a profound sign in the church resonated with me: "The Word was made flesh. Here."

I walked around the church's rotunda, taking in dozens of mosaics of Mary and Jesus that nations from all over the world gave to the church. Each mosaic bears the characteristics of the contributing nation, so visitors can imagine Mary and Jesus not only in Nazareth, but in scenes and cultures of all humanity.

The sign's inscription in connection to the art reminded me that God sent Jesus into a specific location, time, family, and community in ancient Nazareth.

The Word became flesh in Nazareth.

But what is also important about the incarnation is that God became flesh.

Here.

On earth.

Jesus was born into a specific human life, with all his own unique joys and sorrows, hopes and agonies. But the effect of Jesus' life does not remain in Nazareth. He lives in all the world today, in our places of work, our families, and our communities.

Jesus is here.

With us.

So whatever you do with your one human life today, whether you are preparing a syllabus, substantiating credit cards, wrapping a Christmas gift, or hugging your loved one, let this be known: The Word became flesh. Here.

May we live as Jesus came to show us to live.

On earth.

“. . . God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary" (Luke 1:25-27).

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