



The Annunciation to Mary: A Story of Faith, Luke 1:26-38

Eugene Laverdiere

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LaVerdiere's book presents an in-depth examination of the Annunciation to Mary in Salvation History. Just as an ardent follower of art, in order to appreciate fully all aspects of a painting, 'enters' into a painting and views it from within, LaVerdiere, the scripture scholar, enters into Luke's story of the Annunciation to Mary. Realizing that Luke the Evangelist may have been an artist, LaVerdiere explores all aspects of Luke's account of the Annunciation that reveal his artistry as a storyteller, his theology, and his faith. The book contains a preface, an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, and two indices. Each chapter examines a particular phase of the Annunciation from a linguistic and theological point of view. LaVerdiere also raises interesting questions about what many have assumed to be Luke's point of view on a particular issue, for example, is Mary's response to the Angel: 'How can this be since I have no relations with a man?' a statement of disbelief and amazement or one of faith and submission? LaVerdiere leaves no stone unturned when he presents his linguistic analysis of the details of the Annunciation. He includes Greek (in anglicized format) terminology and explains in clear, precise, and 'user-friendly' terminology the intricacies of certain Greek phrases in the Annunciation account and why they present problems for translators, for example, the Angel's salutatory greeting to Mary: 'Chaire, Kecharitomene!' LaVerdiere explores the many possible translations of this greeting given in a variety of bibles and invites the reader to consider how such a greeting that is so rich in divine presence, mystery, and theology can be fittingly rendered in English. All this is presented in a way that leads the reader to a deeper and fuller appreciation of the Evangelist's artistry as well as to a consideration of the depth of the mystery being revealed in the scriptural account. The conclusion presents a masterful synthesis of all that LaVerdiere has examined previously by way of comparison to El Greco's paintings in Venice, Rome, and Toledo of the mystery of the Annunciation, and invites the reader to ponder this mystery in ways that may provoke a renewed spiritual awakening. Anyone who has read a commentary on the Gospel of Luke will find LaVerdiere's analysis not only thorough and professional but also enlightening and evocative. Published by Liturgy Training Publications.

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Kent Dennis:

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