

# ADVENT REFLECTION 2018

## Week 4: The Lord's promise will be fulfilled

*Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth.*

Luke 1:39

Mary goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth who is also expecting a baby. Both women, in very different ways, are experiencing extraordinary pregnancies: Mary, young and still a virgin, conceives her baby by the power of the Holy Spirit; Elizabeth, barren and long past child-bearing age, suddenly finds herself able to have a child after all.

What seems to the world to be impossible has become possible through God's power. The stories of these two ordinary women, whose experiences defy rational explanation, are an inspiration for us when viewed through the eyes of faith.

- Do I have the courage to see beyond what is tangible and believe that God can work miracles in my life?
- Do I believe that a new world is possible where everyone is treated fairly and there is enough for all?
- Am I ready to work to help bring about this new world, the Kingdom of God, here and now?

### PRAYING THE MAGNIFICAT

*Mary, advocate for the lowly and outcasts from society*  
*Mary, advocate for the economically deprived, socially excluded, politically oppressed*  
*Mary, advocate for those who are displaced, dispossessed, forced to flee, living in fear*  
*Mary, advocate for the marginalised and disadvantaged*  
*Mary, advocate for the undervalued and unloved*  
*Mary, advocate for those who suffer prejudice due to ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality or creed*  
*Mary, advocate for those who do not know where the next meal is coming from*  
*Mary, advocate for those who lack clean water and proper shelter*  
*Mary, advocate for those who sleep in shop doorways*  
*Mary, advocate for those who only know poverty and despair*  
*Mary, advocate for those who are in debt to loan sharks*  
*Mary, advocate for those who are tired, lonely and depressed*  
*Mary, advocate for those who find each day an unbearable burden*

*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*  
*Pray for us*

*Mary's Magnificat – a joyful song of praise to God – announces a better way;*  
*Mary's Magnificat reveals the Kingdom right here and now on earth as God planned it;*  
*Mary sings praise to God whose mercy is boundless;*  
*Mary sings praise to God who is constant in his love from generation to generation;*  
*Mary sings praise to God who has a special love for the poor and lowly;*  
*Mary sings praise to God who fills the hungry and sends the rich away empty;*  
*Mary sings praise to God who has promised to love and care for his people;*  
*Mary sings praise to God for whom nothing is impossible*

*Blessed be God*  
*Blessed be God*  
*Blessed be God*  
*Blessed be God*  
*Blessed be God*  
*Blessed be God*  
*Blessed be God*  
*Blessed be God*

© Anne O'Connor

### ACTION IDEAS

- Set an extra place at the table to remind you of those who go without food and companionship
- Place a lighted Advent candle in your front window in solidarity with those who are suffering this Christmas

*Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.*

*She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.'*

*Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'*

Luke 1: 41-42, 45

For the past three weeks we have tried to make space for quiet reflection amidst the hurly burly of Christmas preparation with all its pulls on our time and on our purse-strings.

In this final week of Advent we can remind ourselves of what Christmas really means for us as people of faith: the birth of the promised Saviour.

As we prepare to welcome the Christ child into our hearts we are challenged to reflect on the truth Jesus brings and to consider our response, inspired by Mary's unconditional 'Yes' to God's plan.