

Taking Our Hearts to the Lord

Scripture Sharing Group Resource, Advent 2015, Week 4

Reader 1: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke: (1:39-45)

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. 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. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Silence

Leader: Let us read the Gospel passage aloud together.

Everyone: A Reading from the Holy Gospel

Silence

Leader: Let us listen to a short reflection on this Gospel passage.

Reader 2: Reflection on the Gospel

The great American novelist, Gore Vidal, famously said "When a friend of mine succeeds, something inside me dies!". There was no sense of that in Mary. Mary had just been told that she was to become the mother of God and that, by the way, her elderly cousin Elizabeth was also to give birth to a child. The news about Elizabeth was good but it bore no comparison to the extraordinary life-changing, world-changing news that Mary had received from the Angel Gabriel. Yet Mary had the ability to put her own news aside, and rush to be with her cousin, in order to share in her joy.

Joy is a good word and it captures the essence of that beautiful encounter between Mary and Elizabeth as given to us by St. Luke. Two women full of joy for each other's good news.

Joy is a hall-mark of the Christmas season that is almost upon us. This last week of preparation can be stressful. There is still so much to do, so many expectations to meet and we still have not decided upon that gift for the relative that is impossible to buy for!

But if we are only feeling stressed and anxious something in our preparations has gone wrong. Joy ought to be there too. The joy that Good News has come into a dark and difficult world, a joy that like Mary and Elizabeth we are not meant to keep to ourselves, but rather to share with others.

Silence

Leader: I invite you to share any thought or consideration prompted by the Gospel passage and /or the reflection.

Sharing

Leader: Let us return to our Advent Prayer.

Group returns to page 44 of Advent booklet.

Dioceses of

Achonry, Ardagh & Clonmacnois, Armagh, Clonfert, Elphin, Kerry,
Killala, Kilmore, Limerick, Ossory, Tuam & Waterford & Lismore.