



Daily Reflections

December 23, 2017

Scripture

Luke 1: 57-66

When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son.

Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her.

When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John."

But they answered her,

"There is no one among your relatives who has this name."

So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called.

He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name," and all were amazed.

Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God.

Then fear came upon all their neighbors, and all these matters were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea.

All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, "What, then, will this child be?"

For surely the hand of the Lord was with him."

Our Scripture Reflection

Wasn't Elizabeth aware that she was breaking with tradition by insisting that the baby be named John rather than Zechariah after his father? Surely Zechariah would straighten this perturbing situation out when he scribbled his response to the rabbi's question about the baby's name. But his response was the same as Elizabeth's: "He will be called John" Why the break with tradition? Because God from on high had broken into their lives giving them what they could not give themselves, the one who would "prepare the way for the Lord." And the world would be changed forever because of this.

Food for your Journey

This much is certain: The greatest thing each person can do is to give himself to God utterly and unconditionally -- weakness, fears and all. For God loves obedience more than good intentions or second-best offerings, which are all too often made under the guise of weakness.

--Søren Kierkegaard, *Spiritual Writings: A New Translation and Selection* (Harper Collins, 2010).

A Prayer from the Heart

Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel! May Your Presence renew the hearts of all who hunger and thirst for You. Amen.