



Daily Reflections

December 24, 2018

Scripture

Luke 1: 67-79

Zechariah his father, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied, saying:

"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
for he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his prophets he promised of old
that he would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hand of our enemies,
free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
to give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,

and to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Our Scripture Reflection

One of the key themes that St. Luke uses as he writes his Gospel is that of the "Promise." St. Luke remembers well the words God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 12 when He told him, "Through you and your descendants my blessings will be spread to the ends of the earth." Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth while once childless now see how God can do amazing things so that the Promise will be fulfilled. Their newborn son, John, will make ready the way for the promised Savior, Jesus Christ. In today's Gospel text Zechariah praises and thanks God for His goodness to His people.

Food for your Journey

Who, some 30 years ago, would have pictured a world without the USSR and with the Internet? We talk about "what we hope for" in terms of what we hope will come to pass, but we could think of it another way, as why we hope. We hope on principle, we hope tactically and strategically, we hope because the future is dark, we hope because it's a more powerful and more joyful way to live. Despair presumes it knows what will happen next. But who, two decades ago, would have imagined that the Canadian government would give a huge swath of the north back to its indigenous people, or that the imprisoned Nelson Mandela would become president of a free South Africa?

—Rebecca Solnit, "Acts of hope — challenging empire on the world stage," Orion Online, January-February 2004, orionmagazine.org.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, As I prepare to celebrate the birth of my Savior, help me to remember that this day is also the celebration of the fulfillment of Your promise to save me. You are always faithful and true. Help me to remain faithful to You. Amen