



## Wednesday Prayer

### Second Sunday of Advent – Love still takes the risk of birth

Sunday we'll hear Zechariah's song to his son, John (the Baptist), after being struck mute for the 9 months of his wife's (Elizabeth's) pregnancy. It's a hope-filled song, with an almost "Lion King" feel to it, as I imagine him lifting up John, while the heavens part, a light falls upon him, as he declares:

*"You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High  
For you will go before the Lord to prepare the way  
To give the people knowledge of salvation, by the forgiveness of their sins.  
In the tender compassions of our God, the dawn from on high will 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." ~Luke 1:76-79*

As we prepare our hearts for the coming Christ, ask yourself who could YOU be lifting up this day? Who are the children in your life that perhaps have been neglected or felt like "a nobody"? How might we cherish what they have to teach us in the way of peace? I suspect John felt the same way. Look at the long list of dignitaries Luke mentions in Ch 3:1ff: Emperor Tiberius, Pontius Pilate, Herod, Philip (all the bigwigs). Even the religious leaders, Caiaphas and Annas the High Priest, get a mention. "...and during that time, the Word of the Lord came to *John* in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord..."

John became a prophet, as important as Elijah, calling people to repent and believe in the good news. This crazy nobody, clothed in camel fur, cried out in the wilderness. He had no credentials, but the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. In our world plagued by war and division, consider the children in your community who are just waiting to be lifted up and entrusted with good news of great joy! Never underestimate what God can do with "a nobody." I'm reminded of this poem by Madeleine L'Engle entitled: *The Risk of Birth, Christmas 1973*:

<i>This is no time for a child to be born</i>	<i>That was no time for a child to be born</i>
<i>With the earth betrayed by war &amp; hate</i>	<i>In a land in the crushing grip of Rome;</i>
<i>And a comet slashing the sky to warn</i>	<i>Honour &amp; truth were trampled by scorn—</i>
<i>That time runs out &amp; the sun burns late.</i>	<i>Yet here did the Saviour make his home.</i>

*When is the time for love to be born?  
The inn is full on the planet earth,  
And by the comet the sky is torn—  
Yet Love still takes the risk of birth.*

Thanks be to God that love still takes the risk to be born among us! All around us – children are being born who will prepare the way, who will show us how to love in a world broken by hate. Let us pray: O God, we ask for patience as we wait and watch and wonder at what you are about to do in our lives. May we truly cherish our children and all the ways they will lead us to you this Advent season, in Jesus' name. Amen.