



Sunday of Advent

This reflection is based on Luke's account of the angel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she was to give birth to Jesus, Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth who was also pregnant and Zechariah's waiting for his son to be born and his speech to return. All waiting patiently!

Leader: The Lord is coming and will not delay.

All: He will bring every hidden thing to light and reveal himself to every nation.
Glory to the Father..

All:
“To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
No one who waits for you is ever put to shame.”

“This is our God. We have waited for him so that he might save us.”

“My soul is waiting for the Lord. I count on God's Word.”

Leader:

The Advent season is a time of waiting.
In our culture, waiting is considered a waste of time, a nuisance, a desert between where we are and where we want to be.
Waiting serves no useful purpose.
Yet, Simone Weil, a Jewish writer, says that
“waiting patiently in expectation is the foundation of the spiritual life.”

In Luke's Gospel, Zechariah, Elizabeth and Mary are all waiting patiently in expectation. They have no desire to control their situations and circumstances but are waiting patiently for something new and good to happen to them.

"Do not be afraid" is the angel's message to them.

All:

"My soul is waiting for the Lord.
I count on his Word.
My soul is longing for the Lord more than
watchman for daybreak.

Let the watchman count on daybreak
And Israel on the Lord.
Because with the Lord there is mercy
And fullness of redemption."

Silence

Leader:

Zechariah, Elizabeth and Mary trust
that what was promised to them would be fulfilled
by God as was promised.
God has taken the initiative and is doing the fulfilling.
They respond by waiting in hope.

All:

"I am the handmaid of the Lord.
Let what you have said be done to me."

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

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.
My spirit rejoices in God, my salvation."

Silence *Reflection Question: How do I like waiting?*

Leader:

We believe that God is
already alive and active within us.
Do we dare believe this?
Are we really able to have the mind and heart
of Zachariah, Elizabeth and Mary to hope
that what God has begun in us will be fulfilled
according to God's plan for us?

All:

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you and
the power of the Most High will overshadow you.
Therefore the child to be born will be holy.
He will be called the Son of God.”

Silence

Reflection Question: When was the last time I felt God active in my life?

Leader:

The Scriptures tell us that the whole purpose
of prayer and community is
to support, celebrate and affirm
what God is already doing
within each one of us
and in the whole community.
God is within.
The flame of God's life is in us, is alive in us already!
Can I afford to believe this truth?
Let us today affirm, support and celebrate this great Mystery!
Let us allow it to grow and become stronger
in spite of the world's best efforts to extinguish it.

All:

“Stand ready, stay awake,
be attentive to the Word of God within
so that you will survive all that is going to happen
and you will be able to stand confidently
in the presence of God together
in community and in prayer.”

Leader:

During the Season of Advent the perennial questions to ponder in our hearts are:

- Are we at home?
- Are we ready and able to respond to God’s presence in our lives?
- Are we even remotely aware of this Mystery of God within?
- Will we permit God’s promise to “become flesh” in us?
- Are we capable of hearing in the din of our busy-ness: the stark beauty of God’s Word- the Word made flesh-the Word who lives in us leading us gently to the fullness of life?

Silence to Reflect on the above questions

Sharing

After a period of silence Brothers are asked to share the fruits of their reflection.

All:

“Mary treasured all these words
and pondered them in her heart!”
We now leave pondering the same Mystery!
Amen!

