

DAILY MEDITATIONS

MONDAY: Luke 1:19–20. Imagine if the Archangel Gabriel appeared to you. What would that have been like? This particular Archangel stands before the incomprehensible beauty and splendor of the Most Holy Trinity and brings forth messages of the greatest importance. Gabriel is God’s most notable messenger. Take a moment to ponder what such a glorious apparition would have been like. In the passage above, this glorious Archangel appears to Zechariah as he is fulfilling his priestly duty to burn incense before the Lord within the Holy of Holies. As Zechariah enters the sanctuary while all the people remain outside praying, he suddenly has a vision of the Archangel telling him that his wife Elizabeth will have a child, even though she is advanced in years. But even though Zechariah hears this message from Gabriel, the Archangel who stands before God, he doubts what he is being told. Would you have believed the Archangel Gabriel if you were Zechariah? Or would you have doubted?

TUESDAY: Luke 1:35. Try to set aside all that you know about Jesus and simply ponder these words of the Archangel Gabriel as if you were to hear them as our Blessed Mother did for the very first time. She was told she would have a child, even though she had not had relations with a man. She was told that this pregnancy would happen by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. And she was told that her Child would be the Son of God. What was Mary to think about these amazing revelations given to her by this most glorious archangel? Our Blessed Mother was no ordinary person, and she had no ordinary mind. Her mind was perfectly sharp on account of her immaculate nature. And her mind was continually “full of grace,” as Gabriel said in his greeting to her. She knew God’s voice, and she knew that this archangel was speaking to her a message from on high. As a result, she listened, accepted, believed and consented. We can also conclude that Mary did even more than merely consent. The love she had for God and His will would have been so strong that she would have been filled with an immediate and burning desire to fulfill this command of the archangel.

WEDNESDAY: Luke 1:39–40. We are presented today with the glorious story of the Visitation. When Mary was about two months pregnant, she traveled to be with her cousin Elizabeth who was to give birth within a month. Imagine the scene. Mary had just traveled about 100 miles. She was most likely exhausted. As she finally arrived, she would have been relieved and joyful at the completion of her journey. But Elizabeth says something quite inspiring at that moment, which elevates the joy of all present, including the joy of Mother Mary. Elizabeth says, “For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy” (Luke 1:44). Again, imagine the scene. It was this tiny child within Elizabeth’s womb, John the Baptist, who immediately perceived the presence of the Lord and leaped for joy. And it was Elizabeth who immediately perceived the joy in her child living within her womb. As Elizabeth expressed this to Mary, who was already joyful at completing her journey, Mary was suddenly all the more overjoyed at the realization that she had brought to Elizabeth and John the Savior of the World living within her womb.

THURSDAY: Luke 1:46–47. There is an age-old question that asks, “Which came first, the chicken or the egg?” Well, perhaps it’s an age-old “question” because only God knows the answer to how He created the world and all the creatures within it. Today, this first line from the glorious song of praise of our Blessed Mother, the *Magnificat*, poses to us another question. “Which comes first, to praise God or to rejoice in Him?” Perhaps you’ve never asked yourself that question, but it’s worth pondering both the question and the answer. This first line of Mary’s song of praise identifies two actions taking place within her. She “proclaims” and she “rejoices.” Think about those two interior experiences. The question can be better phrased like this: Did Mary proclaim God’s greatness because she was first filled with joy? Or was she filled with joy because she first proclaimed the greatness of God? Should we proclaim the greatness of God when things are difficult in life? Yes. Should we proclaim the greatness of God when we do not feel His presence in our lives? Yes. Should we proclaim the greatness of God even when we encounter the heaviest of crosses in life? Most certainly yes. Proclaiming the greatness of God should not only be done *after* some powerful inspiration or answer to prayer. It should not only be done *after* we experience the closeness of God. Proclaiming God’s greatness is a duty of love and must *always* be done, every day, in every circumstance, no matter what.

FRIDAY: Luke 1:64. This line reveals the happy conclusion to Zechariah’s initial failure to believe in what God revealed to him. Recall that nine months earlier, as Zechariah was fulfilling his priestly duty of offering sacrifice within the Holy of Holies in the Temple, he received a visit from the glorious Archangel Gabriel, who stands before God. Gabriel revealed to Zechariah the good news that his wife would conceive in her old age and that this child would be the one to prepare the people of Israel for the coming Messiah. Zechariah disbelieved. And as a result, the Archangel struck him mute for the nine months of his wife’s pregnancy. Zechariah was not punished out of spite, or for punitive reasons. He was given the humbling penance of losing his ability to speak for nine months for a good reason. It appears as if God knew that Zechariah needed nine months to silently reflect upon what the Archangel had said. And those nine months produced the desired effect of a full conversion of heart. After the child was born, the Archangel had told Zechariah that the child was to be named John. Therefore, on the eighth day, the day of his son’s circumcision when he was presented to the Lord, Zechariah wrote on a tablet that the baby’s name was John.

SATURDAY: Luke 1:67–68. Our story of the birth of Saint John the Baptist concludes today with the song of praise spoken by Zechariah after his tongue had been loosened on account of his transformation in faith. He had moved from doubting what the Archangel Gabriel had spoken to him to believing and following the command of the Archangel to name his firstborn son “John.” In our day and age, Christmas has become very secular in many parts of the world. Few people take time on Christmas to truly pray and worship God for all that He has done. Few people continually proclaim that glorious message of the Incarnation to family and friends during this most solemn celebration. How about you? Are you able to be a true “prophet” of the Most High God this Christmas? Has the Holy Spirit overshadowed you and filled you with the grace needed to point others to this glorious reason for our celebration?

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 18, 2022

Mission Statement

Our mission is to form Christian Communities that will glorify God by our loving and serving one another, and to extend our love, support, and compassion to the needy.

Most Rev. Jacques Fabre-Juene
Bishop of Charleston

Rev. Jesuprathap Narichetti
(Father JP)
Pastor

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MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday	8am
Sunday	9:30am
Wednesday	9:00am
Friday	9:00am
Adoration	following 9:00am Mass 1 st Friday of each Month

CONFESSION:

Sunday	7:15-8am
Wed/Fri	8:30-9am

Diocesan Office of Child Protection Services
843-261-0430

Diocesan Victim Assistance Minister 843-856-0748

