

### Reflection Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> Week Advent 2023

What a selfless expression of gratitude Hannah shows!! Thinking herself unable to bear a child she then freely gives him back to God in thanksgiving.

How grateful to God are we that Jesus Christ is born within us again this Christmas. He comes at a new time in our lives, in a world changing too rapidly and still very troubled. How will you show your gratitude this year??

Despite the difficulty Mary faced being pregnant out of wedlock, her first concern was for her cousin Elizabeth and she runs to her assistance.

This third week of Advent as a time for rejoicing. We rejoice in the light while we acknowledge the contrasting shades of personal difficulties and sadness. Advent invites us to enter into the dance between joy and sadness where life is lived. When we lose someone we love, we mourn their loss, and we celebrate their life. People suffering from serious illness will celebrate small victories in their treatment, rightly so. Yet ultimately, we will all die and join those of our families who have gone before us in heaven. We have many reasons for rejoicing but they are often intermingled with sadness, making joy all the sweeter. Mary and Elizabeth bear testimony to this.

Advent suggests that joy and sadness are necessary elements of the cycle of life and salvation history, and that one cannot exist without the other. Let us hear and receive Mary's message this Advent. With the worries that trouble us and the concerns that cloud our minds, with the darkness that we see around the world and close to home, Mary's song inspires hope, boosting the belief that the Light is soon coming into the world to make all things new.

May Mary's song of praise not become stuck not in our heads, but in our hearts!

- How do you drain pasta at Christmas time? With an advent collander.
- Why didn't Mom put any sweets in the advent calendar? Because the sweet deliverer was Choco - LATE.