

December 24, 2021 – Christmas Eve

A Season of Joy!

[Luke 1:39-55](#)

“Happy is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill the promises he made to her.”

So, here we are... Christmas Eve. I hope that you have everything bought and wrapped, your meals planned and food cooked, and plan to attend your local church's Christmas Eve service. When I had young children, I am ashamed to say that Christmas Eve was a day of semi-panic as I attempted to get everything done.

Sometimes I would even skip the 12/24 service! Oh my! No joy, just rushing!

Now, as a certified lay minister assigned to a church, I am joyful to be conducting that special evening service of welcoming the Child who would become our Messiah, the Holy One from God.

Having two daughters, I find that I can relate to the joy both Mary and Elizabeth share in their pregnancies. But their joy in this scripture is in the Lord, not necessarily in the fact that they both are expecting babies in unique and special circumstances. In the above verse, Elizabeth proclaims her joy.

Then Mary begins her narrative (The Magnificat) with these words: *“With all my heart I glorify the Lord!”* Pure joy and happiness in what God is doing through them! Their adoration is for God and God's plans. There will be plenty of time to adore their children and get things done, but for now, the focus of their joy is on God.

When I think about how God works in these women, in the world, in you, in me, I become overwhelmed with joy! I become joyfully overwhelmed with the beauty, the mystery, the faithfulness, the expectancy, the work of our God. I become joyfully overwhelmed with the love, grace, peace, example, and work of our Savior, Jesus Christ! And I pray to find Christ's joy in ALL circumstances – not just the good times. I pray that you may find the joy of Christ's presence at all times, as well.

I know you hear this every year, and you pledged to do it: slow down and savor the season. Whether you accomplished this or not this year, please make this day, next year, and every coming Advent A SEASON OF JOY – in all circumstances!

Prayer: *Holy Lord, we come to you joyfully overwhelmed: for this season, for a coming year awaiting many blessings, for family and friends and time spent together, and most especially for the gift of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ – the Messiah. Help us to always live in A SEASON OF JOY – in all circumstances! Amen.*

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