

THE BABY LEAPED IN HER WOMB

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:41-43)

The visit of Mary to Elizabeth tells us that with God nothing is impossible.

Mary has just had the angel Gabriel visit her and tell



her she would be with child even though she was a virgin. Mary humbly accepted what God was telling her to do despite the shame she would face. She told the angel that she was the Lord's servant and consented to his word (Lk 1:38). The passage confirms us that God's Word is true. Elizabeth who had been barren till old age was now with child. Mary's visit confirmed this fact. Elizabeth's words settled the words which the angel had spoken to Mary. The baby inside her, John the Baptist, leaped as soon as Mary met her. She told Mary that she was blessed among women and the child she would bear would be blessed. She bowed before Mary and said she was favoured because the mother of her Lord had visited her. God does impossible things.

Lord, we beseech you to cleanse the hearts of your faithful people with the fire of your love; so that your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming may find in us a dwelling prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and ever. Amen

(Collect for Sunday before Christmas)



TO BREAK THE POWER OF SATAN

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. (Hebrews 2:14,15)

Jesus became like us because it was only by becoming man could he die and free us from the power of death. When God first made man and woman he had made us like him to share in his life and eternal life. But man sinned by eating the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil which God had forbidden and said that if they eat from it they would surely die (Gen 2:17). Adam and Eve ate and lost their part in eternal life and the tree of life (Gen 3:22). Was there any way by which they could get back the blessing of Eden which they had lost? The Bible tells us Yes! through the Lamb who had been slain from the creation of world (Rev 13:8). Just like the Passover Lamb that was unblemished and was killed so that the Israelites could be freed from the bondage of Pharaoh, Jesus the Passover Lamb was sacrificed for us (1 Cor 5:7) to free us from the bondage of Satan and death. God made himself nothing and was born as man. He humbled himself and became obedient to the death on the Cross (Phil 2:7). The tree of life has once again been opened to us by Jesus (Rev 22:2).

(The picture above is that of our Bishop, the Rt Revd. Dr. Paritosh Canning at the Christmas Programme of the Women's Christian College, which is in the Kalighat area of Kolkata on 14.12.21. This college has been helping the girls of our diocese with higher education for 76 years. Our Bishop also inaugurated a recent publication of the College, entitled "Environmental Concerns in India")

WHERE MEEK SOULS WILL RECEIVE HIM

*How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.* (Phillips Brooks)

*Yet to all who did receive him, to those
who believed in his name, he gave the
right to become children of God (John
1:12).*

This Christmas let us pray for those who will hear the Good News of God in Christ Jesus through Christmas Carols, through our celebrations, through our giving, through the persecuted church and the media. Pray that God will work in human hearts that they will come to know that God loves them so much that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (Jn 3:16).

Pray for those whose homes have a vacant place because our loved ones are no longer with us, the Lord having called them to be with him in his loving and perfect will.

PARTICIPATE IN THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. (1 Pet 4:12)

Pray for strength as Christians face persecution.

PRAY FOR THE DHANYA BUDHBAR MAHASAVA

Pray that the Lord will bless our revival meeting to be held on the 8 and 9 February, 2022 in Maliyapotha, Nadia.

Bishop Canning College of Management and Administration has been set up to train youth in Hospitality Management and find employment. Your support will help an underprivileged student in the training, Pray for God's hand of blessing upon this endeavor of our diocese.

The 24 hour Chain Prayer

The 24 hour chain prayer is a chain of people praying around the clock for an hour each from different parts of the world. We have been continuing for three and a half years now. We pray that God's kingdom will come, his name will be hallowed, for the revival of the church, the persecuted church, for healing, prayer requests and for God's will to be done. If you are led by the Holy Spirit to give an hour in prayer every day for this cause or for prayer requests please contact +918334027210 or cniprayertowercalcutta@gmail.com. (Mark 14:37, Rom 8:27, Luke 18:7)

PRESENT YOUR REQUESTS WITH THANKSGIVING

Pray for God's protection upon doctors, nurses, medical staff, and all striving to contain the third wave and the omicron variant of covid .

Pray for the needs of missionary and Bible societies, for evangelists, missionaries, pastors and relief organizations.

Pray for the persecuted church as cases of violence and maltreatment abound.

Pray for the unity , witness and service of the Church of North India now in its 51st year.

Pray for many groups organizing Bible Study, and prayer online.

Pray for the livelihood of migrant labourers.

Pray for our children in senior school whose classes have begun. Pray for those who are appearing for Board Examinations.

Pray for the ministry of Bishop's College

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem .

Pray for a revival in our diocese among our members, in our giving, through Vision 2025, our Diocesan Women;s Fellowship, Diocesan Youth and Diocesan Sunday School.

Pray for all efforts made by our Diocese, NGOs, Diocesan Board of Social Service and our churches to reach those who are suffering.

Pray for the sick: YOUR FAITH HAS HEALED YOU

Rev Fr. Victor Yardi, Rahul David, Rashmi David, Pradip Pradhan, Suparna Sarkar and Bikas Sarkar, Elvina de Menezes, Donna Anderson, Dionne Bose (Durgapur), Bradley Samuel, Deb Kumar Debroy (father of Aniket Debroy), Irene Pushpa Das, Rev Dr. Anugrah Behera, Diana Khawas (Kalimpong), Cynthia Thomas, Maya Chowdhury, Sushila Ambat, Theo Baker, Shanti Manuel, Ruby David(wife of Prabhakar David), Dr. Mammen Chandy, Swapna de Gomes, Dilip Singh (of DBSS), Dr. Leila Varkey (sister of Rev Dr. Sunil Caleb), Bishop Mano Rumlshah, Estelle Sarkar, Wendy Christy (Dubai), Pem Doma Lepcha Panlook (Siliguri), Bipul Biswas (f/o Pronob Biswas, Bishop's House staff), , Debasish Biswas (Serampore), Jennifer D'Souza, Subrata Das, Bhowanipore Church, Winston Gomez (father of Rev James Gomez), Shirley Rodrigues, Bishop Dinesh Chandra Gorai, Del Rodriguez.

Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you (Psalm 63:3).

The Prayer Tower is a weekly prayer letter of the Diocese of Calcutta. Its purpose is to deepen the spiritual life of our diocese by inspiring prayer and the study of God's Word. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).

Prayer Requests can be sent to Rev. Andrew Simick, Prayer Coordinator, Diocese of Calcutta, Church of North India, mobile 918334027210, email: cniprayertowercalcutta@gmail.com