

Saturday 19th December 2020

Advent, Saturday of 3rd week

Reading: Lk.1,67-68

V.68a *"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel."*

The events surrounding John's birth and Mary's circumstances are the announcement of something utterly wonderful and so cause Zechariah to cry out in praise.

This is a response typical of us human beings. Praise is what we do when something is announced that has the potential to turn things around for us and make things better. We praise those who deliver us in our needs, who make a discovery which proves to be helpful or provide a solution for a going concern. Sometimes their work is hailed a 'saving the world'.

But what is announced here is of a different order from that of man. The praise is not to man but to "the Lord, the God of Israel": Who sees the need of his people and has come to help and to save them, to bring the deliverance he has promised them and show himself faithful to his promises.

Nowhere will we know that God is faithful but in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, because he comes to fulfil the promise of deliverance from sin and death that God gave to the people whose God he chose to be, to fulfil the promise "I will be their God and they shall be my people" through cross and resurrection, so that Jesus should be Lord and 'God with us' (Immanuel) for all who believe.

Lord God, we praise you, for you are trustworthy in all that you promise and faithful in all that you do. You uphold all who fall and lift up all who are bowed down.