



Wednesday Prayer

4th Sunday of Advent – My Spirit Rejoices

And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

Luke 1:46-49

Whenever I hear these words from Mary, I remember my Sunday School Christmas program when I was in the sixth grade. The eight girls in my class performed an interpretive dance to the words of the Magnificat. We wore beautiful white robes with blue sashes and did synchronized actions for all the phrases. We practiced and practiced and we thought we were so very cool. It was rather cutting edge for a small-town rural church - and I probably should mention that I don't believe it was ever performed again!

Although I still remember the feeling of joy I had back then, I understand better now why Mary's prayer is so loved and part of our Advent preparation. In fact, I read that Luther saw Mary's song as a model for Christian prayer and praise, not dependent on merit but rather in response to God's grace.

The God Mary celebrates is not content merely to point people toward heaven; God's redemptive work begins here on earth. Mary's God delights in taking what is small and insignificant in the eyes of the world to do extraordinary and unexpected things. And Mary's Lord lifts up the lowly, granting them dignity and honor, a seat at the table and a voice in the conversation.

These are all themes that underpin the work of Cherish All Children. We do what we can here on earth - we educate, equip and engage churches and communities to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking. We may feel like our impact is small, but God takes all our work to do the unexpected. And we continue to lift up God's children in prayer, whose circumstances are likely more similar to Mary's than our own. We pray for their safety and an abundant life of dignity and respect.

Lord, Let our prayers echo Mary's song of praise for God's extraordinary power, presence and life-giving activity in the world. We rejoice with Mary that you look upon humanity with undeserved love and mercy and have blessed us with the promised messiah, Jesus Christ. We pray that God will work through us to serve and embrace all children in need. Amen.

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