
19 Friday

FRIDAY, 19th DECEMBER

Judges 13: 2-7, 24-25

Ps 70

Luke 1: 5-25

“The dawn from on high shall break upon us, to guide our feet on the road to peace”. Jesus is the coming Dawn, and He is heralded by John the Baptist. John’s role and the announcement of his conception is this day’s gospel reading. And it echoes another announcement of an important person’s birth and role, Samson’s, recorded in the Book of Judges. It also closely parallels the announcement to Mary, by the same archangel Gabriel, that she is to be the mother of the Messiah. In both announcements Gabriel speaks of what the child-to-be-born will be. In John’s case, his father Zechariah is told that he will be filled with the Spirit, bring back many to the Lord their God, go before Him to turn fathers’ hearts towards their children, preparing people for the Lord. Like Mary later, Zechariah was at first struck with fear; but unlike Mary, he couldn’t believe how what Gabriel said could come true. So he became dumb until John was actually born. Was it also that he was so overwhelmed by the huge importance of what Gabriel said, and by his own responsibility, that he couldn’t speak? Is anyone today so overwhelmed by hearing the announcement of John’s birth and role (to say nothing of the news of Christ’s coming)? “Christmas” is maybe too familiar. Maybe we’ve lost the thrill and awesomeness of the preparation for the Messiah, of the first light that comes just before the dawn begins to break on a new era. Lord, renew our faith and our sense of wonder and awe at the news of Your coming, that we may share John’s role of preparing Your way for the peace of our world.

Wordcount: 288