
22 Monday

MONDAY, 22nd DECEMBER

1 Samuel 1: 24-28
Ps: 1 Sam 2: 1, 4-8
Luke 1: 46-56

Mary's great song of praise to God and thanksgiving for all His marvelous favours both to herself and her people is one of the most beautiful of all prayers or hymns. It echoes other songs of joy in the Bible, of mothers praising God for their children, and even (as with Hannah for her son Samuel) offering her child completely to God's service. The context of Mary's song is her visit to Elizabeth her cousin, both to share Elizabeth's joy in her coming birth-giving and to share her own Good News of the Messiah she was carrying. And she stayed three months with Elizabeth. Her visit was reflected in the older Christian cultures, where visiting family and friends was for a long time one of the main activities of Christmastime. The custom of exchanging gifts has survived a bit better, even in the non-religious celebrations of this season. It's not only that the Magi brought gifts to Bethlehem, but the birth of Christ himself is the Father's gift to us human beings. In return, Christ's whole human life was an offering of service to God His Father. And He was to offer His life, for us all, as gift to His Father. All of us can say with Mary that 'the Almighty has done great things for me'. Let this be my prayer this Christmastime, remembering not only the personal gifts and graces the Lord has given me, but more especially the great things the Lord has done for all of us that we share together; and may this really be a time of sharing in joy and gratefulness. May our celebrating Christmas be a proclamation of the greatness of the Lord.

Text wordcount: 284