

THE PARISHES OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST AND ST MARY MAGDALENE

35 Brighton Place, Edinburgh EH15 1LL

Bingham Avenue, Edinburgh EH15 3HY

Parish Priest: *Fr. Jock Dalrymple:*

0131 669 5447

Deacon – *Revd Eddie White:*

07986 015772

Pastoral Team: Alice Codling, Jennifer Morris, and Chris Vinestock

Shared Parish House: 3 Sandford Gardens, EH15 1LP

Parish Administrator: Mr Enrico Fertini

(Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10am to 3pm & Friday 11am-4pm)

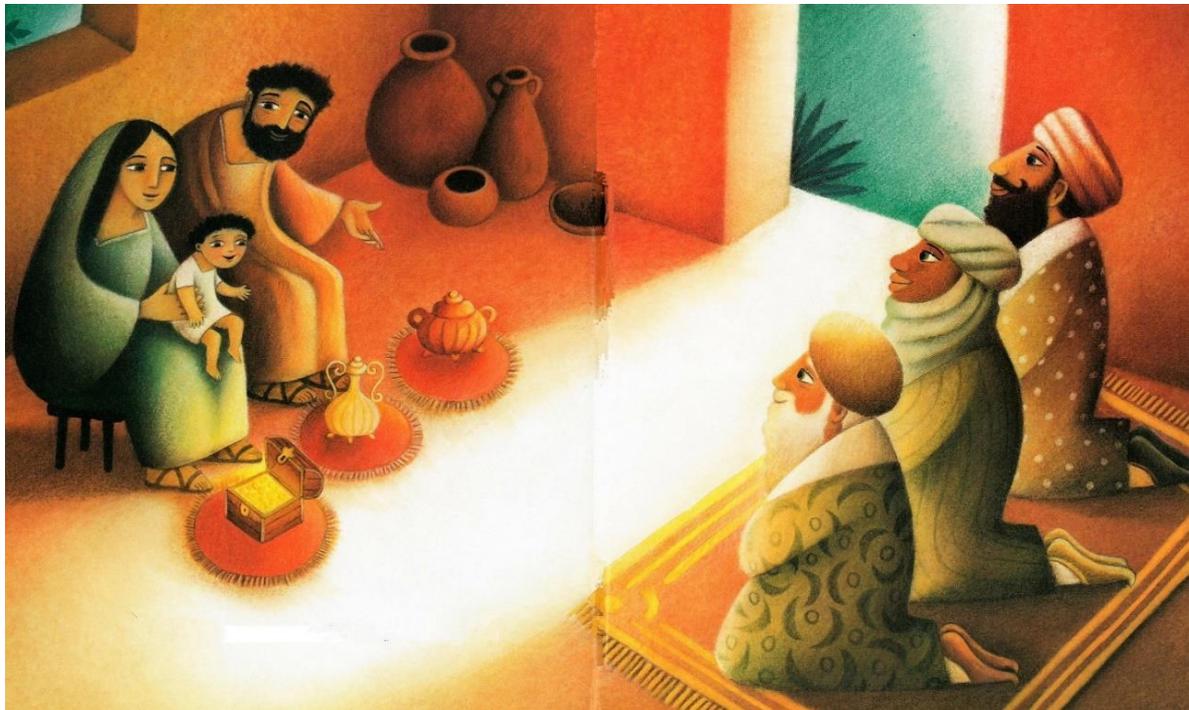
Web address: www.stjohnsportobello.co.uk

Web address: www.stmarymagdalenes.co.uk

Joint Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/StJohnsandStMaryMagdalenes>

Joint e-mail address for our sister parishes: stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com

New Year's Day - The Feast of Mary, Mother of God Sunday - The Epiphany of the Lord 1/2 January 2022



*They saw the child with his mother and falling to their knees they did him homage and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.
(Matthew 2,11)*

This Sunday, the Feast of the Epiphany, is **the annual Day of Prayer for Peace**. There is a Pastoral Letter from Bishop Nolan, President of the National Justice and Peace Commission with this newsletter. A collection for Justice and Peace will be taken at all our Masses.

WHY NOT TRY OUR ON-LINE PRAYER AT NIGHT – 9.15pm Every Evening

The prayer, led very gently by parishioners Donald Scott and Lesley Reid, will start at 9.15pm each evening and last for less than 15 minutes. For ease, the Zoom link will be the same each evening:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9129622900?pwd=b1F1THhtY3NVeGptOWY0VGw2K2xBQT09>

Meeting ID: 912 962 2900 Passcode: Prayer

We include the link in the parish Newsletter each week and it will also be on the parish website and Facebook page. **For those who wish, every day at 9pm we will send an email out with the link for you to click and join.** It is the same link every night but getting the email and 15 mins to organise ourselves will hopefully make it easier for all to join. Please email stjohnsandstmarymagdalenes@gmail.com to ask to be added to the email group.

Keeping Safe at Mass in our Churches

With the rapid spread of the Omicron Variant, the Scottish Government is recommending we take **frequent lateral flow tests**...in order to keep each other safe, **can we gently suggest that we take a test before we come out to Mass....?**

- *1 metre distance should be maintained at all times*
- *Hand sanitizers to be used on entry and exit*
- *QR codes (for NHS Test and Protect program purposes) to be used where possible (available at the front doorway and on each bench), or welcomers will record details*
- *Please try to avoid queues at the front door as much as possible*
- *Ventilation is essential in our effort to contain the spread of the virus*
- *The Church doors will remain open during Mass*
- *The heating system will be switched off prior to commencement of Mass, as it circulates warm air (and carries the risk of spreading the virus)*
- *Sanitizing of the seats is advised after each Mass (helps greatly appreciated for this task- please please can we have some new volunteers....)*

TOGETHER LET'S ENTER THE NEW YEAR – SAFELY...

This Week

Saturday 1 January – SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

11.30am – St Mary Magdalene's – **New Year's Day Mass** - livestreamed

6.30pm – St John's – **Vigil Mass of the Epiphany** - livestreamed

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Sunday 2 January – THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

9.30am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

11.15am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Mass**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Monday 3 January

10.00am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Tuesday 4 January

6pm - Skype – PEP Meeting

7.00pm – Prayer Room – **Mass** – livestreamed

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Wednesday 5 January

10.00am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

1.00pm – Seafeld Crematorium – **Funeral Service for Denis Davidson**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Thursday 6 January

10.00am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Mass** – livestreamed

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Friday 7 January

10.00am – St John's – **Mass** – livestreamed

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Saturday 8 January

6.30pm – St John's – **Vigil Mass**

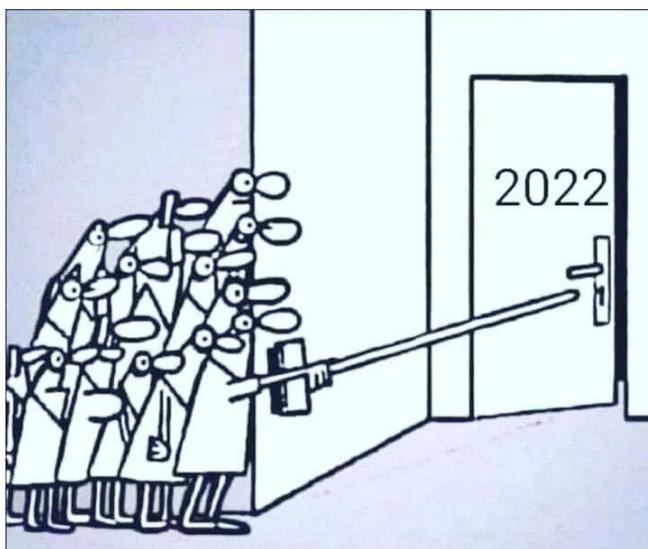
9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**

Sunday 9 January – FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

9.30am – St John's – **Mass with P4 'Do This in memory of Me' children** – livestreamed

11.15am – St Mary Magdalene's – **Children's Mass with P3 Reconciliation children'**

9.15pm – Zoom – **Prayer at Night**



Have Faith in 2022

Faith is confidence in what we hope for and the assurance that the Lord is working, even though we cannot see it.

As we move into 2022, we need faith more than ever. With the pandemic still looming and more unknowns ahead, faith is needed more than ever.

Have faith & pray with us for a brighter year ahead.

***Lord, You make all things new
You bring hope alive in our hearts
And cause our Spirits to be born again.***

***Thank you for this new year
For all the potential it holds.
Come and kindle in us
A mighty flame
So that in our time, many will see the wonders of God
And live forever to praise Your glorious name.***

Amen.

LOOK WHAT YOU CAN CREATE WITH STONES ...



King of Kings!

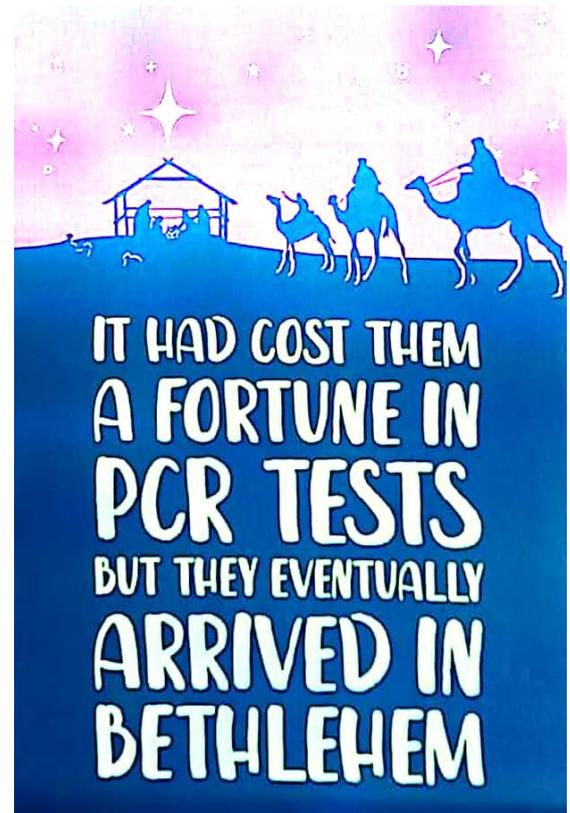
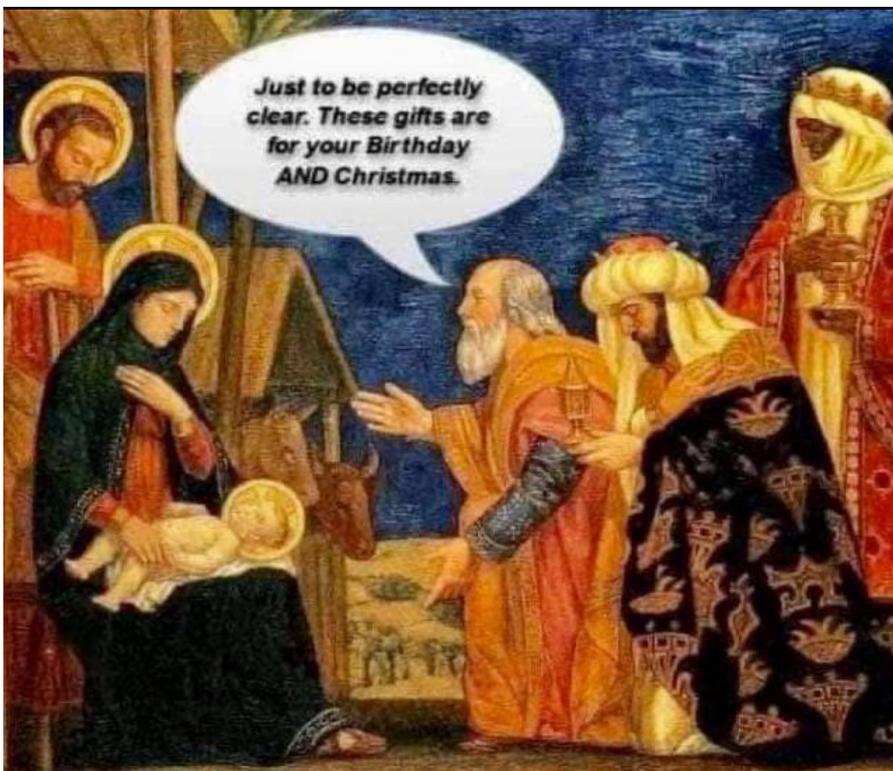
—Matthew 2:10-11

Picture taken from **Patti Rokus**' song 'Little Baby Jesus' to go with her book 'A Saviour is Born, Rocks Tell the Story of Christmas', https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ap34_Ec-cRc

From Archbishop Leo's Weekly 'Ad Clerum'

Save the date - *Amoris Laetitia - The Joy of Love*. There will be three talks explaining this important document, an apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis, **beginning 10 January** and led by Sr Anna Marie, the Archdiocese's Catechetics Advisor, and Fr Nick Welsh, vice rector of the Scots College in Rome. Details to follow soon.

Save the date - *Music Day*. This takes place on **Saturday 22 January** at the Gillis Centre, Strathearn Road, Edinburgh, 10:00am-3:30pm. The theme is *Liturgical Music Making in a Post-Pandemic World*. The day is open to everyone, especially those involved in leading and playing music, as well as singers. Details to follow soon.



A REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL FOR THE EPIPHANY

(The author of these reflections is a friend of Fr Jock living in Northumberland)

When I delved into its history, it came as something of a surprise to me to discover that the concept of a 'baby shower' is actually quite ancient, with its origins in ancient India, Greece and Egypt. In recent years it has taken on something of a resurgence in America and Europe. Western economies are built on consumerism so anything that helps to fuel the fire of buying more and more 'stuff' is welcomed by many. I am informed that, traditionally, males are excluded from such events and that they tend to be an all-female occasion. In ancient times they were a celebration of the transition from girlhood to motherhood and were largely symbolic. Gifts were simple with only the mother's mother allowed to give silver. Now when we read of baby showers, we see that they can be quite lavish affairs, and gifts designed to impress the guest list rather than be of any practical use to the new-born. What on earth do you take? Can you lose face if your 'gift' is nowhere near as lavish as the next? Pressures are never far away. Is your eldest child obliged to take piano lessons because your neighbour sends their daughter to viola lessons? Pressures, pressures, pressures! 'I don't want to go overboard with my gift, but I don't want to be the one with cheapest offering.'

The three wise men whose journey we commemorate today have always been identified with 'gifts'. They found the child Jesus after a long journey and immediately presented him and his parents with gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. Somehow, I cannot imagine that the following conversation ever took place. "What are you taking? We don't want to take the same thing?" "I don't know, I cannot decide between pearls or rubies!" "Balthazar had the crazy notion of taking a flock of sheep, but I told him they would slow us down!". "Well, we're going to have to decide quickly, that star is not going to be visible for many more days before its orbit moves it away." "Right! I'll decide for us all. – Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh it is." We cannot be certain of much in life, but we can be pretty certain that this conversation never took place!

What would we take to the infant Jesus? Long after the infant had grown into the man, he sat on a hillside and preached to his would-be followers: *Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* Often in life, we tell those close to us that we are offering prayers for them, especially if they are in a difficult space. Heartfelt prayer can only be borne of a pure heart for when we pray for another, we offer everything we have: our inner thoughts, our time, and our spiritual energy. We lift them on the wave of our prayers and we present them to the healing power of God's love. We practice purity of heart. We don't feel sufficiently qualified to give direction or a plan of action, and of the little we have, the most precious thing we can offer is heartfelt prayer.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu died this week. Politicians in the UK were eager to jump on the bandwagon of publicity that was a consequence of the death of a great, humble man. Perhaps they wanted to bask in his greatness. Many felt under pressure to say something that would translate into a pithy soundbite, and many failed miserably. They reminded us of the important maxim: if you have nothing to say, then say nothing. Presumably they wanted us to hear or read what they said. I wonder if they ever paid much attention to some of the things Archbishop Tutu said in life. One of his statements has always stuck in my mind: *If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.* In his eyes, there was no room for fence-sitting.

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. Perhaps these words are one of the great gifts from him, words addressed to a world that seems incapable of tackling injustice. We shy away from interfering or are fearful and so we cross by on the other side. We prefer the fence. Sometimes it's difficult to balance but if we use both hands and feet as anchor points, we can sometimes manage it. Here is an idea for us to reflect on in this new year of 2022. Could we resolve to never choose the fence. Could this be the greatest gift that we can take to the infant Jesus, the greatest gift we can give to the world around us. It would put us on a par with the Wise Men of today's feast, and it will surely make the world a better place.

Happy New Year!



Please pray for those who have died recently:

George Service – John Waugh – Liz Collins (Len Connelly’s sister) – John Slaven – Vincent Reape – Gordon McGhee

Please pray for those whose anniversaries occur around this time:

Julie Forbes – Evonne Taylor – Terry Delaney – Ed Collins – Conan Murie – Doreen Howes – Anne-Louise Dalrymple – Alec Linton – Jean O’Flaherty

Anniversaries:

St John’s

- Jan.1:** James Malone (1989), Catherine McElroy;
- Jan.2:** Terry Delaney (2016); Monica Cubitt (2007); Anne Marie Phillips (2004); Elizabeth Stone (1992); Alexander Donnelly (1985); Thomas Mackay (1979); Annie Graham (1973);
- Jan.3:** Betsy Hogg (1981); James Lacey (1973);
- Jan.4:** Hedley Smibert (2007); Fr.Thomas Gaffney SJ.(1998); Lucia Maher (1994); John Brown (1984); Bernard McAllister (1981); John Browne (1977);
- Jan.5:** Jean O’Flaherty (2015); Jessie Handren (2009); James Bannon (1999); Douglas Shannon (1992); Joseph & Isobel Simpson (1989); Renee McMartin (1984); John J McWilliams (1958); Kathleen McGovern (1940);
- Jan.6:** Rita Scott (1997); James Huntly (1946); John Christie; Mary Gralton; James McNamara; James Meehan;
- Jan.7:** Kathleen Fusco (2010); William Turnbull (1995);

St Mary Magdalene’s

- Jan.1:** Christina McCluskey (2014);
- Jan.2:** Mary Fairbairn (2019);
- Jan.5:** Ronald Forrester (2011);
- Jan.6:** Margaret Hay (2000); Jane Newman (1995);
- Jan.7:** Elizabeth Marinello (2013);

Please pray for those Parishioners who are sick:

St. John’s: Nessie Cairns, Alf McNamara, Margaret MacKenzie, David Dowie, Fiona Connel, Inge Downey, John Freeman, May Thomson, Sheila Service, Margaret Campbell, Ann Dobie, Kim O’Neill, Frank Logan, Sheelagh Dobson, Ernie Moran, Bob Kelly, Jean Bonnar, Mike Iannarelli, Chloe Sutherland, Norah Bruce, Mike and Patricia Lawler, Ruth Viso, Mary Grady, Pauli Walker, Anna Butler, May Flynn, Vincent Knowles, John Cregan, young Saoirse Golden, John Whyte, Frances Cunningham, David Reid, Charlotte McGregor, Betty Dougal, Anne Thomson, Mike Noonan, Sarah McManus, Mike Burns, Sr Jennifer Lindsay, Maureen Low, Mary Slight, Rose Thornton, Kitty Dykes, Norman Telfer, Maureen Lawrie, Kathie Gallagher, Erin Corbett, Roz Byers, Marie Angela Crolla and Lorraine Syme.

St Mary Magdalene’s:

Tom Bauld, Sam Burns, Ray Donnelly, Jacqueline Marinello, Anne Tolson, Sandra Watt, Mary Cole, Chris English, Andrew Farmer, , Clive Davis, Isobel Phillips, Margaret Duffy, Maria Scott Jnr, Louise Gorman, Ann Dockrell, John Newall, Michael McPhillips, Bridget Malone, Charles Malcolm, Margaret Ryan, Jacqueline Hannan, Julie Keegan, Rose McKay, Laurie Wallace, Annie Watson, David O’Donnell, Andrew Banks, Jude Ferguson, and Mary and James Muir.

Please pray for sick friends and relatives of our Parishioners:

Shoky Trivelli (aged 6), Ant Ridge, Bridget Bonner, Roger Bromley, Bernard Traynor, Evelyn Tibbs, Helen Briton, Robert Daly, Mary Thomson, Fr Raymond OCSO, Tony Rigg, Caitlin McGillivray, Jozefine O’Connell, Robin Butler, Caroline Minto, Henrietta Fraser, Pat Mulvenna, Stuart Falconer, Nan Doig, Claire Johnston, Emma Bromet, Elizabeth, Baby Percy Keiran McShane, Colin Sandham, Lewis White, Baby Alfie McDevitt, Elizabeth and Gordon Marron, Dawn Clarke, William Kinsley, Katie McAnenny, John Kellagher, Niamh McDougall, Joy Allan, Colin Raasch, Annie Ross, Christopher MacKinnon, Jaroslav Icina, Annabelle Cervantes, Emily Buchanan, Ann Thorp, baby Josh Simpson, Helen McCann, Dani Miniette., Peter Millar, Leo Stone, Sr May Lewis, Joan Murray Hamilton, Sr Margaret Mary, Jean Nelson, Margaret Anne Marton, Betty Blyth, Lauren Fitzpatrick, Fr Christy Fox, Michael Igoe, Robert Shaw, baby Kinsley McMillan, Margaret and Victoria Roddam, Clare Richardson, Karen MacKay, Laura Anderson, Richard Reid, James O’Rourke, Tommy Muir, James Shepherd, Peter Hanley, Andrew Franklin, Ellen Green, Jamie Mitchell, Eunice Macdonald, Peter Bromley, Edward Caulfield, Igor Rekowski, Diana Hibbert, Joan Brooks, Mary Turnbull and young Ray Donovan Syme

Offertory Collections – 26 December 2021



St Mary Magdalene	St John the Evangelist
£813.50 total including Offertory of £563.50 and Gift Aid of £250.00	£1922.37 total including Offertory of £647.37, Gift Aid of £495.00, and £780.00 Online Donations

TOWER TOMBOLA – Many congratulations to Anna Tanzi who won £300.00 in the December draw.

PAMOJA FASHION – There will be no Pamoja Fashion sale on Saturday 8 January 2022. The Team wish everybody Happy Holidays.

FINDING THE HIDDEN TREASURE by Benignus O'Rourke

Chapter 51 – A Song in Our Hearts



As we sit quietly in the Lord's presence, we begin to savour the sound of silence. All without is silent. All within is silent. There is just God and us. And he is silent too.

In the hushed and sacred silence, words are now mere noise. We stand in God's presence and take a deep breath. Our whole being is gathered together in a reverent hush. It is as if our whole being is lulled to sleep, drawn into our hearts which stand ready, expectant. We are not expecting God to say anything, but we are listening.

God is listening. This is the moment when all is wrapped in silence. Maybe a word comes from deep within, or maybe not. All that matters is openness, attentiveness, alertness. Just being with God and knowing that God is with us. Not trying to understand. Just a calm letting be. The moment is a gift.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta was once asked: '*When you pray, what do you say to God?*' She said: '*I don't say anything. I listen.*' Then she was asked, '*All right. What does God say to you?*' She said: '*God doesn't say anything. God listens.*' And she added: '*If you can't understand that I can't explain it to you.*'

In daily life, when we listen to ourselves, what we usually hear is the jangled noises in our minds. In the silence we pick up another sound. When the mind becomes quiet, we pick up the music that is in our hearts. That is an extraordinary discovery.

If we can silence what Augustine calls the din in the mind the inward ear, the ear of the heart, picks up that music which is everywhere, '*if only,*' he says, '*the world's noise did not intrude*' (**Confessions 11.10**).

Augustine dares to say that if we become totally silent, in body, mind and spirit, we hear a sound that few human ears have ever heard, the sound of heaven's music. Those who know how to be still for long periods hear the music of God's festivity. And this finds an echo in our hearts. They begin to sing.

People who have never heard anything within except the discord of their noisy minds are surprised to find there is a song in their hearts. The touch of God in our lives seems always to stir a song in our hearts and on our lips. It is as if in any encounter with the divine the heart must sing. The father of John the Baptist broke his long silence with a song, when his son was born. He sang of the '*loving kindness at the heart of our God*'. And Mary, mother of Jesus, when she was greeted by Elizabeth as '*the mother of my Lord*', broke into song. She sang of the great things the Lord had done for her (**Luke 1:46**).

When we reach our still centre, we, too, find ourselves breaking into song, a song of delight, a song of gratitude, a song of praise. We realise the absolute truth of who we are, and this makes the heart sing.

A REFLECTION BY JANE WILLIAMS ON ROGER VAN DER WEYDEN'S PAINTING OF THE VISITATION OF MARY TO ELIZABETH



It seems to have been a kind thought on the part of the angel Gabriel to put Mary and Elizabeth in touch with each other. The angel tells Mary (Luke 1:36) that she is not the only one to receive an angelic announcement, and that, in fact, a relative of hers is also expecting a miraculous baby. Mary sets off at once.

Van der Weyden shows the moment when the women meet and Elizabeth's child dances in the womb.

The older woman is bent forward by the energy of the kicking child in her womb; there is a tenderness and solicitude in her lined face as she looks at the young woman beside her, so much vulnerable than she is herself.

Van der Weyden shows Elizabeth framed by her substantial home, with its ecclesiastical frontage, its peaceful views of hills and a still pond with a stately swan. That might be Zachariah, waiting in the porch, to keep watch over his wife and the unborn child. Mary has none of that.

Yet Elizabeth, comfortable, respectable, experienced, offers Mary the balm of her support and respect.

Elizabeth praises her for her courage and faith. She gives Mary the most precious affirmation – the unborn child recognises the one whom he will serve.

The women share this moment of intimate joy as they marvel at the quickening of life and offer each other the strength and warmth of touch.

This simple, everyday scene is shot through with echoes. It is strange enough that two women, neither of them wealthy nor of the ruling classes, are centre stage in the telling of the world's salvation. This is a pattern that will continue throughout Jesus' ministry, where kings and rulers are hardly seen, and when they are, they understand nothing. Peasant women will be the first witnesses of the invincible resurrection life of God. Great prophetic words and images play around the two women, supporting each other with love. The great King David danced in triumph as the Ark of God's presence was brought home to Zion.

Now here is John the Baptist, not yet born, but dancing in the womb as he comes into presence of Mary, the Ark, the one who is carrying the presence of God home to God's people. In 2 Samuel 6:14-15 there are trumpets and shouting and the army dances to celebrate its triumph.

Here in front of Elizabeth's quiet house are only two women, no fanfares, but yet a moment of even greater significance, as God the Son waits to be born into the human race.