

## **Joy and the Good News**

**Luke 1:39-45**

‘In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth... “My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour”’

*This passage seems to speak of the communication of joy – joy in the completion or fulfilment of some good thing which lies beyond the selfish personal interests of the individual. It also helps to expand our understanding of faith. Faith is not only about trusting and believing in the word and providence of God. It is sourced in joy.*

**With these thoughts in mind, do we ever experience the reality of our Christian belief as something which genuinely excites us?**

**How do we communicate our own joy and excitement to others in a way which ‘connects’ with their life experience?**

*Mary’s journey to the house of her cousin was, presumably, long and difficult but it did not seem to diminish the urgency and joy of the message, or her faith in what the angel had spoken to her.*

**Is the flame of faith and joy still burning in our own hearts?**

**What, for us, is the Good News? Something we have lived and ‘been through’? Or the habit of a lifetime? Has our faith changed us? Does it allow us to keep on changing?**

**In what way does this affect our telling of the Good News?**

*The idea of trust is so often discussed and yet we live in a world in which trust seems to be diminishing almost by the day. The increasing tendency to think about security, concern for protection against litigation even in the most mundane circumstances and the difficulties experienced by many in maintaining long term friendships, not to mention marriages, are just a few instances where there is need of more trust.*

**In what way does Mary trust her cousin, Elizabeth? What are her expectations? What might be her reservations?**

***Does joy seem to win out over prudence and the need to be guarded in her remarks? What are the good and bad habits of prudence that we can discern in our own lives and relationships? Do we experience a certain caution or protectiveness in our relationship with God?***

***How does this affect our telling of the Good News?***