

Advent 4, 23/12/2012, Holy Trinity

Luke 1: 39-55

I am often amused at the question “Are you ready for Christmas?” as though if you are not ready, in some strange way, you can put it off until you are ready.

You know that it doesn’t work like that and here we are on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, with to-morrow as Christmas Eve and the next day back here again celebrating Christmas Day and the Baby’s birth.

But on this day, Advent 4, we are confronted with two women, both of whom are pregnant, Elizabeth an older woman, the wife of a Jewish priest and the other, Mary a teenage girl with an extraordinary tale to tell.

I can imagine that neither of the women had a clue what they were letting themselves into with the birth of their respective boys.

For Elizabeth, her son, John would live a life in the bush until he became God’s messenger calling the people to change their way of living, and proclaiming the coming of God’s Messiah.

For Mary, her son, Jesus would be an itinerant teacher, preacher who would eventually suffer the indignation of crucifixion as a common criminal, but who would be raised to life after his death and burial and whom we now know as the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God.

But back to to-day’s story of the two women, the visit of Mary to Elizabeth.

The two were related and both had remarkable experiences surrounding their pregnancies and they could share an awareness of God’s involvement.

At their meeting, Elizabeth’s unborn child “leapt in her womb”, not just a kick, or movement, but “leapt in her womb” and she became prophetic in saying to Mary, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”

Mary’s reply is that wonderful song of praise that we now know as the Magnificat.

It is not an affirmation of the good stuff of the status quo.

It is a radical turning of the world upside down.

The proud are scattered.

The powerful are brought down.

The rich are sent away empty.

On the other hand, the lowly are raised up.

The hungry are fed.

It is a vision of change and transformation.

And in the midst of all of this, I and I am sure that you do, bleed for the innocent children, the teachers, parents, relatives and friends of the elementary school in the U.S. of a little over a week ago.

If ever we needed change and transformation throughout the world it is now.

The change and transformation that God brought about in Jesus began with two pregnant women, one an older woman and the other a teenager.

They heard and recognised the Holy Spirit within them and they obeyed and made a difference.

As we make our final preparations for the worship of the Christ Child, so we, with God's grace, will make the changes and transformation in our life that others will recognise the God within us so that there will be the domino effect throughout the world.

Change and transformation is my 'catch cry' as we work through these last days before we come together again to worship the Christ Child.