

A Mid-day Meditation

From

Sue's Perspective

*"When the course of [Zachariah's] priestly assignment was completed, he went back home. It wasn't long before his wife, Elizabeth, conceived. She went off by herself for five months, relishing her pregnancy. "So, this is how God acts to remedy my unfortunate condition!" she said."* - Luke 1:23-25 (The Message)

It is very hard to imagine what went on in Elizabeth's mind when she discovered that she was pregnant. For years, try as they might, having a child was simply not in the cards for her and Zachariah. I mean, seriously, wasn't she beyond those years, physically and emotionally? I am convinced that Elizabeth was not in a great frame of mind when she said...

*"So, this is how God acts to remedy my unfortunate condition!"*

We like to paint a picture of what things were like for Zachariah and Elizabeth – and frankly, for all of the people associated with this story and the story of Jesus' birth, to suit our Hallmark vision of what took place. But these were very real, God-fearing people, whose lives were pretty ordinary in the scheme of things for their time in history. They just wanted to live in peace, making the best of what faced them in spite of the oppressive Roman presence. It's not unlike how we are right now, facing a province-wide lockdown in an attempt to curb our "oppressive Roman presence," COVID-19. Yet, even in the midst of the ordinary, the extraordinary happens. God acts, first by talking to Zachariah, then by intervening so Elizabeth can conceive and finally by giving Elizabeth nine months of silence in which to contemplate what's happened...

*"So, this is how God acts to remedy my unfortunate condition!"*

Zachariah wasn't able to tell Elizabeth what happened to him at the temple. Yet, I am fairly sure he was able to relay his experience to her in some way. Five months on her own, "relishing her pregnancy," would give Elizabeth ample opportunity to come to terms with becoming a mother and she would also have time to sort out the part that God played in all of this. She would discover that she was chosen by God, for reasons unknown to her at the time, to be the mother of a child who would be instrumental in proclaiming the arrival of the Messiah. Where many women might say, "why me?" Elizabeth went on to say, with clearer understanding...

*"So, this is how God acts to remedy my unfortunate condition!"*