

# Advent Reflections

Friday, December 22



Hannah and Mary lived 1,000 years apart, yet reveal to us the spirit of Advent. The two mothers utter their songs in a spirit of humility that waits for God's saving action in their lives. They are songs of the anawim, poor ones who are faithful to God. As St. John Paul described, "the spirituality of the biblical 'anawim,' that is, of those faithful who not only recognize themselves as 'poor' in the detachment from all idolatry of riches and power, but also in the profound humility of a heart emptied of the temptation to pride and open to the bursting in of the divine saving grace." As the birth of Christ comes closer we are called to live out this anawim spirit.

The readings also point us to the *O Antiphon* for the day, "O King of all nations and keystone of the Church; come and save man, whom you formed from the dust." We are waiting in eager anticipation for the birth of Savior who will topple oppressive regimes and raise the lowly to great heights. Waiting for the King who will save us; mere creatures of dust. Hannah and Mary show us how we should wait. We wait with a prayerful and humble heart that asks God to show us His mercy and power.

In three days an event happened that changed the world 2,000 years ago. In three days will you experience the event that can change your life?

Father Stephen Lawson

## Today's Readings

### Reading 1 [1 Sm 1:24-28](#)

In those days,  
Hannah brought Samuel with her,  
along with a three-year-old bull,  
an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine,  
and presented him at the temple of the LORD in Shiloh.  
After the boy's father had sacrificed the young bull,  
Hannah, his mother, approached Eli and said:  
"Pardon, my lord!  
As you live, my lord,  
I am the woman who stood near you here, praying to the LORD.  
I prayed for this child, and the LORD granted my request.  
Now I, in turn, give him to the LORD;  
as long as he lives, he shall be dedicated to the LORD."  
She left Samuel there.

### Responsorial Psalm [1 Samuel 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd](#)

R. (see 1a) **My heart exults in the Lord, my Savior.**

"My heart exults in the LORD,  
my horn is exalted in my God.  
I have swallowed up my enemies;  
I rejoice in my victory."

R. **My heart exults in the Lord, my Savior.**

"The bows of the mighty are broken,  
while the tottering gird on strength.  
The well-fed hire themselves out for bread,  
while the hungry batten on spoil.  
The barren wife bears seven sons,  
while the mother of many languishes."

R. **My heart exults in the Lord, my Savior.**

"The LORD puts to death and gives life;  
he casts down to the nether world;  
he raises up again.  
The LORD makes poor and makes rich,  
he humbles, he also exalts."

R. **My heart exults in the Lord, my Savior.**

"He raises the needy from the dust;  
from the dung heap he lifts up the poor,  
To seat them with nobles

and make a glorious throne their heritage."  
R. **My heart exults in the Lord, my Savior.**

### **Alleluia**

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**  
O King of all nations and keystone of the Church:  
come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!  
R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

### **Gospel Lk [1:46-56](#)**

Mary said:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.  
for he has looked upon his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his Name.  
He has mercy on those who fear him  
in every generation.  
He has shown the strength of his arm,  
and has scattered the proud in their conceit.  
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones  
and has lifted up the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.  
He has come to the help of his servant Israel  
for he remembered his promise of mercy,  
the promise he made to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children for ever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months  
and then returned to her home.