



Sermon Excerpts:

*“Authenticating the Advent”*

December 12, 2021

*Companionship for the Christmas Season*

**Luke 1:39-46** *“A few days later Mary hurried to the highlands of Judea to the town where Zacharias lived, to visit Elizabeth. At the sound of Mary’s greeting, Elizabeth’s child leaped within her, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a glad cry and exclaimed to Mary, “You are favored by God above all other women, and your child is destined for God’s mightiest praise. What an honor this is, that the mother of my Lord should visit me! When you came in and greeted me, the instant I heard your voice, my baby moved in me for joy! You believed that God would do what He said, that is why He has given you this wonderful blessing.” Mary responded, “Oh, how I praise the Lord.”*

Frontline work and back-line support. All of life can be frontline, having a child, being a parent, aging, finding employment, maintaining life, dealing with change, the list is endless.

This is where she was linked with people of mutual belief, mutual experiences, and mutual hope. The visitation records how Mary's life was affirmed, and how her faith was confirmed, celebrated, and strengthened...

Mary's faith, as great as it was, would very likely have faltered had it not been for the fellowship of Elizabeth...

- Christmas companionship teaches that we can expect from God the unexpected.
- Christmas companionship teaches that every common person is known to God.

- Christmas companionship teaches that God has at least one other person who will affirm and encourage us.
- Christmas companionship teaches that we can expect God to lead us, one step at a time.
- Christmas companionship teaches that God value's our praise to Him.

This Christmas,

- Make amends.
- Seek out a forgotten friend.
- Dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust.
- Share some treasure.
- Give a soft answer.
- Encourage youth.
- Keep a promise.
- Find the time.
- Forgo a grudge.
- Forgive an enemy.
- Listen.
- Apologize if you were wrong.
- Try to understand.
- Dismiss envy.
- Examine your demands on others.
- Think first of someone else.
- Appreciate.
- Be kind; be gentle.
- Laugh a little. Laugh a little more.
- Express your gratitude.
- Welcome a stranger.

From the Editors of McCall's Magazine