



## Advent Reflection for Friday, December 2nd

For the podcast click [here](#) to listen.

Luke 1: 8-17

Once when Zechariah was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'

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Reflection by Missy Trull:

What does it feel like to be promised the fulfillment of your deepest, truest hope?

I lead a group at the hospital where I work called, "blessing writing." I invite participants to reflect on the deepest, truest hope or longing that lives inside themselves. We share with one another, and collect all these hopes, gather them up like treasures, and place them together to create a communal blessing. Some lines shared in group might never leave me. Lines like:

*May those I love never know loneliness, hunger, or desperation. May my mind be as free as my soul. May all of humanity remember our place in the wildness of the Earth.*

*May I be forgiven; May I forgive myself. May my child never question the love I have for him. May there be peace. Peace, peace, peace.*

What would it feel like to have an Angel promise me the truest, deepest desire of my heart? I imagine it would be difficult for me to believe, difficult for me to take in. I suppose it is hard for me to believe hopeful promises like the Angel's to Zechariah because I have been so thoroughly disappointed by some elements of life. The losses, for one, of those I love and those I wanted more time with, the greed, the moral failures (especially my own), the inequities in the world, the violence, hatred, and profound self-interest—all of these plagues, pains, sufferings of life. It's like overtime my heart has developed this protective forcefield: if I don't really expect for things to be different, than I cannot be hurt, or...further disappointed. Stories like this one ask me to lower the forcefield, to open my heart and listen to my truest deepest desires. Stories like this ask me to believe; to believe that things can change, that my desires are sacred, maybe even a part of something bigger than myself, maybe a part of God and maybe, even possible.

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Missy attends Holy Apostles with her husband, Matt, and, when attending virtually, Chauncey, their dog, comes too! She loves Holy Apostles and is so grateful to be a part of this community. She is a chaplain at New York Presbyterian Hospital, enjoys reading and running, and has recently started making candles. She wishes all of you a meaningful Advent season.



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