



Advent Reflection for Tuesday, December 13th

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Luke 1: 57-66

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, 'No; he is to be called John.' They said to her, 'None of your relatives has this name.' Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, 'What then will this child become?' For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

Reflection by Ellen Correia Golay:

There is much in this passage that connects with my own life. For starters, I also have a son named John! Something tells me it is not a coincidence that the Mothers assigned me this passage.

When I think about Advent and the Christmas season, I have always thought of it as a celebration of the miracle of birth, which is something many of us have experienced in our own lives. For myself, the birth of my twin boys John and Geddes, in early December 8 years ago was fortuitous after we dealt with infertility for some years. They were born prematurely (as many twins are) and had to stay in the hospital NICU until they grew a bit more. John came home from the hospital after 1.5 weeks but Geddes had to stay a bit longer. And then yet another miracle happened - Geddes was discharged from the NICU on Christmas Eve to spend Christmas at home with his family. In our family, we call this the "Christmas Miracle."

Another experience common to welcoming a new baby mentioned in this passage is the naming of the child. When my John was born, we did not have so much debate over his name as the community did in

this passage. We had decided the first of our twins would be named John after my late father as long as he somewhat looked like a “John”. I am not *exactly* sure what it means to look like a “John”, but we felt our first baby did very much look like a “John”, so John it was.

Finally, the passage ends with the community wondering what this new baby will become when he grows up. I too wonder what my boys will become as they get older, and it is interesting to see what aspects of their personalities as babies still hold now that they are elementary age - Geddes still loves dogs and John still loves music, just like they did when they were babies. This passage says “For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.” I like to think that the hand of the Lord is with all children, helping guide them towards becoming their true selves and living a happy life.

Ellen Correia Golay has been attending Holy Apostles since Spring 2022. She lives in Kensington with her husband Geddes, sons John and Geddes Jr, and new rescue dog Honey Marshmallow.

