

St Mary's Hymns, Thought and Prayers for 20th December 2020

As usual, this is in hard copy, via email & on the church website: <https://www.stmarysacocksgreen.org>

[St Mary's 10am Sunday Service will be recorded & added to YouTube later that day.](#)

[You will be able to get the direct link from my Sunday email, from the website, or by going to St Mary's Acocks Green channel on YouTube and selecting the playlist – it includes 2 hymns](#)

[If you are not attending the services - either wait for this link or use the sheets to say a service at 10am.](#)

Hymns for the week:

The Angel Gabriel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzC9dxwRddc>

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKu0or0t8Uw>

The Thought

Everything was new for Mary. Now with Joseph, engaged and just getting used to the idea that she was getting married, she was happily looking forward to so much.

Then the impossible happened, the visit of an Angel! They don't happen often, even in the Bible, and this is the chief messenger Gabriel, it's understandable that she was afraid.

Now an impossible greeting by the Angel. He's saying that Mary is the Favoured One. As a humble girl, this was a surprise. Could the Lord think favourably of her...that she was truly special? This conversation was getting deeper. Then an impossible promise to this ordinary young woman that she would bring to birth a new King in David's line whose kingdom will last forever. 'How can this be?' asks Mary. There are too many impossible things in a row, is it any wonder that Mary questioned the Angel, a very courageous thing to do!

The Answer? More impossibilities: that God's Spirit would bring to birth a holy child, a Son of God. But, says Gabriel, to prove it, the impossible turning possible has already happened in your relative. Mary may have already heard rumours of something mysterious having happened to her cousin Elizabeth. Was it an Angel who had visited her cousin's husband Zechariah? Well, Elizabeth was now expecting, which put paid to some of the insults throughout her long adult life – she was not barren!! If that is the case, concludes the Angel, it's obvious that 'nothing will be impossible with God!' At this point Mary gives in: I am the Lord's servant, let it be as you say!

God turns the impossible to the possible in fulfilling his promise to save humanity and bring them back to him through Mary's Son. We need to remember this in our own lives which so often seem impossible to save from irreparably damaging actions, and especially when present coronavirus circumstances limit our actions and lives. God is the creator of possibilities which trash the impossible.

This week open your eyes to those possibilities which occur in every person you meet and even in yourself, and as we conclude Advent, we look to the fulfilment of impossible prophecy, when the word of an Angel became the Word of God made flesh in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Intercessions

As we remember Mary today, we give thanks that Almighty God can use very ordinary people to bring his love into the world. Thank God that this young girl gave her courageous obedience and thereby became part of salvation for all humanity. Pray for present day saints in churches across the world who give their lives to witness to Christ. Pray for visitors to churches and explorers of faith. May this Christmas be a time of healing for so many who are hurt by illness, bereavement, conflict or circumstance.

Lord, enable all to gather simply with as few members of family and friends as possible, and protect them from illness. Pray for the safety all who will travel over the coming days.

Pray for our Prime Minister and government, and all the leaders of the world in their pandemic decisions. Remember all who are organising vaccinations, that they may be effective in restricting the virus, and that normal life may soon resume.

Pray for Eastern America where extreme cold and snow threatens many communities. We continue to pray for calm in Ethiopia, that there may be peace wherever there is conflict. Pray especially for peace in the Holy Land, its surrounding nations, and for its many faith communities.

Organ Music - Faith: *MaCleod*, Pastorale: *Simper*, To a Wild Rose: *MacDowell*, I'll walk with God: *Brodzsky*
David Streeter