

## Reading Sunday 5 December 2021

### Luke 1: 57 - 80

#### The birth of John the Baptist

<sup>57</sup> When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. <sup>58</sup> Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

<sup>59</sup> On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, <sup>60</sup> but his mother spoke up and said, 'No! He is to be called John.'

<sup>61</sup> They said to her, 'There is no one among your relatives who has that name.'

<sup>62</sup> Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. <sup>63</sup> He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, 'His name is John.' <sup>64</sup> Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God. <sup>65</sup> All the neighbours were filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. <sup>66</sup> Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, 'What then is this child going to be?' For the Lord's hand was with him.

#### Zechariah's song

<sup>67</sup> His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

<sup>68</sup> 'Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,  
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

<sup>69</sup> He has raised up a horn<sup>□</sup> of salvation for us  
in the house of his servant David

<sup>70</sup> (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),

<sup>71</sup> salvation from our enemies  
and from the hand of all who hate us –

<sup>72</sup> to show mercy to our ancestors  
and to remember his holy covenant,

<sup>73</sup> the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

<sup>74</sup> to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,  
and to enable us to serve him without fear

<sup>75</sup> in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

<sup>76</sup> And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,  
<sup>77</sup> to give his people the knowledge of salvation  
through the forgiveness of their sins,  
<sup>78</sup> because of the tender mercy of our God,  
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven  
<sup>79</sup> to shine on those living in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the path of peace.'

<sup>80</sup> And the child grew and became strong in spirit<sup>(a)</sup>; and he lived in the wilderness  
until he appeared publicly to Israel.