



19 DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS NOVENA

INTRODUCTION: Dear friends, on this Fourth day of the Novena in preparation for Christmas, we ponder on God's inscrutable plan in the lives of an elderly couple Zechariah and Elizabeth and their son John, the precursor of Jesus, the one who was to make straight the path for a Messiah who would usher in a new creation transformed by his reign of love and peace.

SCRIPTURE: Lk 1: 57–64. (*Birth of John the Baptist*)

REFLECTIONS: Zechariah and Elizabeth were very much people of tradition, yet they were able to turn aside from the practiced and the usual, to follow the promptings of God. As we bring our life before God, we ask that we may recognise where our habits have dulled our awareness of God's prompting. May we be more open to God's surprises and his timely interventions.

O ADVENT ANTIPHONS: *O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!*

INTERCESSIONS: RESPONSE: Come Lord, do not delay!

'John' in Hebrew means 'God's grace' John is graced by God and is also an instrument of God's grace. May our lives too, be a blessing to someone in some way. **R/-**

John leaped for joy in the womb of Elizabeth as she met your expectant mother: Let the world welcome your coming with joy. **R/-**

God our Father, John the Baptist recognised Jesus as the Lamb of God; through us, let the world recognise your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. **R/-**

John the Baptist lived what he preached in his life: Give us the courage to stand for the truth and to live our convictions. **R/-**

We pray for all the modern-day prophets who are the voice of the conscience in our corrupt world. **R/-**

CONCLUDING PRAYER Lord, You, whose glory is complete, came to us in perfect humility as a helpless child in the womb. Your love for us and Your humility is unsurpassed and brings it us to our knees in prayer and worship. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: Optional

