

# IN EXCELSIS DEO

## ADVENT 2024

**Thursday, December 12**

**Read: Luke 1:21-25**

The angel Gabriel had been 'busy' delivering messages ... Prior to the verses we read here, Zechariah had been 'on duty' in the temple praying to God, specifically, praying for a son, when the angel Gabriel appeared stating "your prayer has been heard, your wife Elizabeth will bear a son and you will call him John." However, most likely due to he and his wife being of an 'older age', doubt clouded Zechariah's belief of the angel's message. As a result of his doubt, the angel made Zechariah mute – that is, until the day of his son's birth. The people waiting for Zechariah to exit the sanctuary were the first to experience his muteness yet somehow, those people understood that, while Zechariah had been in the church, he had seen something special, something great, something unexpected – a vision! We read in the verses that the wife, Elizabeth, did indeed conceive and give birth to a son (John). Although disgraced during her time of pregnancy, Elizabeth knew in her heart that this birth was a gift from God and, her belief and understanding of this gift, removed any disgrace she held in her heart. Contrary to Zechariah's doubt, Elizabeth had none. The message of Gabriel to Zechariah was "your prayer has been heard ..." and the message which Gabriel will extend next will be to Mary and Joseph ... "you have found favor with God ..." From our Biblical scriptures we all know the name of the son which Mary bore – something special, something great, something unexpected! Sometimes we all need to remove doubt from our hearts and believe in the surprise of the unexpected.

Dr. Lori Bade