

## PROMISES AND PEACE

December 9, 2023

### Bible Readings

Take a few minutes to read the Bible verses listed and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in how this verse applies to you this week.

Luke 1:26-55

### Memory Verse

<sup>46</sup> Mary said: With all my heart I praise the Lord,  
**Luke 1:46**



# CASEY'S DAY

written by Ron Vandenburg  
 illustrated by Chad Thompson



A storm pressed down on a coastal community. People gathered inside a mall to shelter from the wind and rain. Worried, they huddled around store televisions watching weather updates. One man talked about his island home, bearing the brunt of the storm. He wondered what would be left when it passed.

"Why are you so calm?" asked a young woman. "You're losing everything!"

The man didn't feel calm, but he answered, "I'm a Christian, and I pastor a church."

The woman's face lit up. "Of course!" she said. "You have God. I got it! It all makes sense."

During Advent, we remember stories of long-ago people who faced great uncertainty. Imagine Mary, a teenager, called by God to be Jesus' mother. "How could this be?" she wondered at first. Mary didn't have riches or fame; she lived a humble life. But the angel Gabriel assured Mary. "God's favor is on you," he said. "Anything is possible with God." These reminders prepared Mary to accept the big thing God asked her to

do.

A while later, as baby Jesus grew within her, Mary sang a beautiful song, praising God. Her words declared truths bigger than fear or worry. "God is merciful!" she sang. "He keeps his promises!" Mary sang about how God turns the world's ways upside down. He makes the weak strong. She sang of Abraham.

Remember Abraham? God promised that Abraham's descendants would outnumber the stars in the night sky. Mary trusted that God would keep this promise, and she believed she had an important role to play in God's story.

We often face uncertainty in life. When we're afraid, we can look to God, the author of our stories, the one who calls us each by name. Our security and our peace rest in his great love.

## Prayer

God of mercy, you didn't choose Mary because she was strong or rich or perfect. You chose her because she was faithful. Help us to be faithful too. Give us your peace when we are afraid or uncertain. Thank you for calling each of us by name. Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, to rescue us from sin and darkness. We love you, Lord. We know you love us. Amen.

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