



## Week 4

# Dream

*A time for prayer and silent meditation –  
you may wish to light a candle.*



Synod  
2021  
2023

For a synodal Church  
communion | participation | mission

*“In his freedom,  
the Holy Spirit knows no borders,  
nor does He allow Himself to be limited by memberships.  
If the parish is home to all in the neighbourhood, not an exclusive club,  
I recommend: leave the doors and windows open... Allow all to enter...”*  
Pope Francis

### **Opening Prayer – This short poem has the title, ‘Mary pondering’:**

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What is this seed that God has planted,  
unasked, uncompromised, unseen?  
Unknown to everyone but angels  
this gift has been.

And who am I to be the mother,  
to give my womb at heaven’s behest,  
to let my body be the hospice  
and God the guest?

Oh what a risk in such a nation,  
in such a place, at such a time,  
to come to people in transition  
and yet in prime.

What if the baby I embody  
should enter life deformed or strange,  
unable to be known as normal,  
to thrive or change?

What if the world, for spite, ignores him,  
and friends keep back and parents scorn,  
and every fear of every woman  
in me is born?

Still, I will want and love and hold him,  
his cry attend, his smile applaud.  
I’ll mother him as any mortal,  
and just like God.

### **Readings – Luke 1: 39-45**

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah.  
She went into Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth.

Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting,  
the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

She gave a loud cry and said,

”Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?

For the moment our greeting reached my ears,  
the child in my women leaped for joy.

Yes, blessed is she who believed

that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.

### **Acts 2:17**

This is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

In the days to come - *it is the Lord who speaks* -

I will pour out my spirit on all mankind.

Their sons and daughters shall prophesy,

your young men shall see visions,

your old men shall dream dreams.

**Reflection – by Bishop Mark O’Toole**

Jesus in the power of His Spirit wants us to help one another along the road,  
to find our home in Him,  
and to find new ways, new models, new pathways which will help us to reach out,  
to invite others in our world to join us on the road.  
For the Lord desires so very deeply that they too find their home in Him.  
May the Holy Spirit help us to encounter one another,  
to listen deeply to one another,  
to show us the direction the Spirit wants us to travel,  
so that we can be more effective witnesses of Jesus to those who do not know Him.

**Themes for Reflection**

*As we have done before, if you are doing this reflection with others, try to listen actively and without judgment. Do not enter into debate but rather search for what the Holy Spirit might be saying through the other person; pay attention not only to the words but also to the tone and feelings of the speaker; and listen actively to yourself, mindful of your own thoughts and feelings as you speak. Whether alone or with others, always pause before saying anything, asking that the Holy Spirit might guide you.*

**Dream Questions –**

**What is God’s dream for me?**

1. What is God’s dream for me today, what does God want me to be?
2. What is God’s dream for me for my whole life?
3. How can I help others to become what God calls them to be?

**What is God’s dream for our Parish?**

4. What attribute or qualities does God most want our parish to reflect to the world?
5. How do we collectively build the Kingdom of God here in the Elk Valley?
6. What is God’s dream for our Parish in twenty years time?  
And how do we move towards fulfilling that dream?

**What is God’s dream for the Church?**

7. How can the universal Church journey together as one body?
8. How can the universal Church reflect the face of Christ to the world?
9. How can the universal Church fulfil God’s dream for its future?

**Closing Question –**

In light of the last eighteen months living with Covid and your reflections on the four Advent themes, moving forward what are you most looking for,  
from the Church?  
from the Diocese?  
from the Parish?

*You are very welcome, indeed encouraged to share your answers with the parish. All responses will be anonymised, and they will not be judged, but taken and shared with the diocese. E-mail to [ElkValleyRC@gmail.com](mailto:ElkValleyRC@gmail.com) with the heading “Synod”*