

+WEEKLY SERMON

communicate@blackburn.anglican.org



Women of God can transform the world

I don't know about other men of the Diocese, but I can categorically state that in my house the women are in charge! They let me live under the illusion that I have a place and what I say matters, but basically, they sort everything out. My wife is the chief events manager and manages things like birthday reminders and social events and my daughter is the meal planner and dictator of what lives where in the house. I try to manage meals, organise where things go and book the social events, but tend to mess it up and am politely reminded to stick at what I'm good at (I am still working out what this is!).

As we reach the end of Advent, the story in Luke's Gospel of Mary visiting Elizabeth is one that is fairly well known by many but great to revisit and delve into once more. What I love about the passage is the clear reminder of the importance place of women in the church and how women of strong faith can transform the world. In the telling of the story, it is easy to overlook the depth of the relationship with God that is evident in the exchange between Mary and Elizabeth. Both women were filled with the Holy Spirit causing Elizabeth to exclaim her joy at the revelation of God incarnate and Mary to sing out the song we know as the Magnificat, drawing on the promises of God as spoken through the prophets and singing them anew. These words are a comfort and inspiration to many and the story recalls the deep faith of Mary and Elizabeth all those years ago that enabled God's transforming work to come to be.

As we reflect on this passage from Luke's gospel, let's thank God for the work and witness of the women who serve Him in His Church and in this year of prayer for growth and renewal let us pray for more women to know the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in their lives to be a catalyst for the transformation of our Diocese. Also, just as Mary and Elizabeth both listened to God and responded to His call, let us pray for more women to hear the call of God on their lives and respond to Him.

Stephen Whittaker, Diocesan Secretary