

A Prayer of Mary

Praising the Mighty One

Luke 1:39–56

CONNECT: What does praise look like and feel like for you? For me, it's often associated with music. I love to sing praise songs in a congregation, swaying in time to the strong rhythm of drums, guitars and other instruments. I love the old hymns just as much; a beautiful organ accompanying a well-loved hymn can lift my heart to God in a wonderful way. God's goodness and love feel powerful and real when music fills my heart.

I also find myself praising God when I hear a good story, particularly a story about God's unexpected and powerful intervention in someone's life. Sometimes those stories are local and close by: a friend describes an answer to prayer, or I hear someone tell a story in church about God's faithfulness in his or her life. Other times those stories come from far away.

GROUP DISCUSSION. In what settings do you find yourself praising God? What form does praise usually take for you?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Write a prayer of praise. Base the prayer on God's action in your life, in the lives of family and friends, and around the world. As you write, think about God's actions throughout time as well. If you are unable to write a prayer of praise right now, write a prayer that expresses your willingness to grow in learning to praise God.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, praises God for his mighty power in her life and among people in need. Her song of praise encompasses the local and the global throughout all time and is a favorite New Testament prayer for many Christians. *Read Luke 1:39–56.*

1. List the extraordinary events described in these verses.
2. The word "blessed" is used four times in this passage. Who is called "blessed"?

What do you think the word "blessed" means?

3. In the first few lines of Mary's prayer, she focuses on God's work in her own life. Notice the names and characteristics of God Mary cites in verses 47 to 49. Why do you think she cites those particular names and characteristics of God?

4. What names and characteristics of God have you especially noticed lately?