



# Listening, Praying & Discerning

## Week 2 – Prayer for the Impossible

“God has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant... scattered the proud... brought down the powerful... lifted up the lowly... filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.” Luke 1:48, 51, 52, 53 NRSV

What do we make of the impossibility of the birth narratives? In *We Make the Road by Walking* (Chapter 15), Brian McLaren describes how the births of both John the Baptist and Jesus take place in the context of impossibility. John’s mother, Elizabeth, is too old to give birth; Jesus’ mother, Mary, is still a virgin. McLaren invites us to see these stories as words of audacious hope: the impossible becoming possible – not just for Mary and Elizabeth, but for the rest of us as well. What impossibility wishes to become impossible in our lives? In our congregation?

There are always miracles when the impossible becomes possible. How do we plough the fields of our souls to receive this impossibility? How do we ready ourselves to be surprised? Or – even more provocatively – how do we prepare *ourselves* for becoming the representation of the impossible becoming possible? What if Jesus being born in Mary is a metaphor for Jesus being born in us? What if the transformation of Mary is the transformation of ourselves – as we too conceive and bear God’s presence for this world? If as a congregation together, you became a Mary figure in your community, how would you be invited to conceive and bear God’s presence to one another, in your local context and the larger world?

Try to spend anywhere from 2 – 20 minutes per day in intentional silence. [Listen for how you are being invited to take the shape of Mary, to allow Jesus to be borne in you and to bear God’s presence to one another and in this world.](#)

(Note: For a prayer app to support your time of prayer, please see: <https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/centering-prayer-mobile-app>)



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