

God is in our midst, like a child in a womb – and this is God's child in all of us. God's presence in Israel is God's presence to us all:

*People of Zion, all people, sing and shout for joy  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.*

This awareness has to begin somewhere and it begins best in those most dispossessed of self in the sense of being 'poor in spirit', pictured here as the lowly, the hungry, those considered least in the kingdom. And so, because two holy handmaids are receptive to the Lord, John the Baptist recognises Jesus in the womb of Mary and kicks for joy. We can perhaps universalise this in the words of Thomas Merton:

*At the centre of our being is a point of nothingness which is untouched by sin and by illusion, a point of pure truth, a point or spark which belongs entirely to God, which is never at our disposal, from which God disposes of our lives, which is inaccessible to the fantasies of our own mind or the brutalities of our own will. This little point of nothingness and of absolute poverty is the pure glory of God within us.....it is in everybody...if we could see it... I have no programme for this seeing. It is only given. But the gate of heaven is everywhere.(Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, 158)*

The glory of God is everywhere and just, very occasionally, we see it in one another – but one day it will be all there is.

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