# Friday, December 23

Reading: Luke 1:68-75 NRSV

*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,*
*for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them,*
*He has raised up a mighty saviour for us*
*in the house of his servant David,*
*as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,*
*that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.*
*Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,*
*and has remembered his holy covenant,*
*the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,*
*to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,*
*might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness*
*before him all our days.*

Praise
The God
Upon the high
Place, the God who
Came down the mountain He
To save the wilful children who Loved,
Saw a glittering in the dark crevices He loves, and
And searched for hiding places where He will love forever
Free Could not see. He pulled them out before the boulders crushed them,
To serve Unwound the vines from their arms and pulled burdock from their hair.
He carried them upon his back, up to the highest peak, where the pure snow could clean
Their wounds and let the unfiltered sunlight smooth their furrowed brows. He laid them in their
Beds and covered their bodies with warm quilts, but did not latch the door, did not lock the gates.

*"Of all creation's bounty realized,*
*God's greatest gift, the gift in which mankind*
*Is most like Him, the gift by Him most prized,*

*Is the freedom He bestowed upon the will.*
*All his intelligent creatures, and they alone,*
*Were so endowed, and so endowed are still.*

*From this your reasoning should make evident*
*The value of the vow; it is so joined*
*That God gives His consent when you consent."*

Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso,* Canto V, Lines 19-27