

Anglican Diocese  
of Cyprus  
and the Gulf

[www.cypgulf.org/  
retreats](http://www.cypgulf.org/retreats)

Maggie Le-Roy,  
Retreats Facilitator

An occasional letter 33: 9 December 2020



[retreats@cypgulf.org](mailto:retreats@cypgulf.org)

Tel: +357-22-671220 / +357-99-155092

## Opportunities

Diocese  
Advent Retreat  
12 December 2020  
Click [here](#) for more  
details.

Online  
Advent Retreat  
St Augustine's  
College

Four themes of Waiting, Watching, Rejoicing, and Consoling are considered. Click [here](#) to listen to the introduction and see the email address under the video to register.

## News

You may have heard that due to Covid-19 the Katafiyio Retreat House will sadly close on 31 December.



We are waiting in hope to be able to announce details of a new home for Katafiyio where day and residential retreats will be facilitated. Do join us in spirit as we hold a Thanksgiving Service at Katafiyio on 22 December at 1130. Sadly, due to Covid-19, this cannot be an open event.

## Retreating involves Waiting

If there had to be a common theme running through 2020 for everyone, no matter where they were, it would be "waiting". Waiting to meet with friends and family, waiting to travel, waiting at a distance from others, waiting to be maskless, waiting for a vaccine. It's not something we tend to be good at. We're impatient, we want it now, whatever it is. And in this time of Advent, the season of waiting, we are getting glimpses of light at the end of the tunnel of our waiting - a gift in our lead up to Christmas!

People who go on retreat usually arrive expectant that God will show up for them in some personal way - throw light on a problem, give comfort, direction, etc. Waiting for that enlightenment can be difficult. In that time there is a sense of wanting to do things right, to prepare well.

Waiting time is necessary for something to happen. It may take nine months - like Mary's pregnancy or developing the vaccine we've been longing for.

How easy it could have been for Mary and Joseph to give in to the tensions, the forever months, in waiting for the birth of the something new.

Today life moves fast - we are encouraged not to wait for anything, it feels a waste of time, but if we give in too soon we may miss out. In the last line of R.S. Thomas' poem "Kneeling", he concludes "The meaning is in the waiting".



Usually we fill our waiting times with things that take our minds off the waiting - shopping, decorating, socialising, etc. Mary got away from all that and found gift in the waiting with Elizabeth. The shared waiting enabled anticipation; in the anticipation came a song; and in the song was the recognition of "the Mighty One has done great things for me".

What if we were to simply wait without distracting ourselves? I wonder what song we would sing?

The waiting is necessary in order to experience fully the gift in the not yet time. Then we can be ready for the birthing and the sense of relief and joy this brings.

Let's continue waiting  
with expectation  
this Advent.

## An Exercise

### Expectancy

Watch [this video](#) of 9 months in the womb.

- Wonder at what happens in the waiting.
- Consider what happens if those 9 months are cut short - what might be missing.
- Be grateful to God for the waiting that was part of your own development.

Now look back over the last 9 months of this year - create an action replay movie in your mind.

- Wonder as you see what has happened in the waiting.
- Consider what you have learned and valued in this time.
- Be grateful to God for the waiting and what this has brought about in your own development.



Listen to this Advent  
Song by John Drury  
[We Are Waiting](#)

- What might you be waiting for at this time of Advent?
- How are you preparing yourself for this?
- Where is God in it all?