The Village Gossips

From „Cloth for the Cradle“, Iona Community Scotland

**Narrator:**

In any small village, news travel quickly.

Therefore it is only to be expected

that the strange changes in the lives

of Mary and Elizabeth

might have been food for other

people’s thought.

**Mrs Matthew:**

Well,

you know how I’m not one for gossip,

but wait till I tell you this.

You know that old woman Elizabeth

with the man who’s never spoken

for nine months.

**Mr Luke:**

Sure, what about her?

**Mrs Matthew:**

They say she’s had a little boy.

**Mr Luke:**

At her age?

She’s eighty-eight, I think.

**Mrs Matthew:**

Well, that’s what I heard,

…and it was on very good authority!

**Mr Luke:**

Are you sure you’ve got the right woman?

You are not mixing her up with her cousin?

**Mrs Matthew:**

Who?

Mary?

**Mr Luke:**

That’s her.

Now, I’m not one to talk about anybody,

but wait till I tell you this…

she’s pregnant.

**Mrs Matthew:**

Never!

How do you know?

**Mr Luke:**

You can tell.

You can just tell.

**Mrs Matthew:**

Oh okay, you can tell… all right…

**Mr Luke:**

I heard her in the shop last week

asking for a dress eight sizes too big for her.

There we are…

I draw my own conclusions…

**Mrs Matthew:**

So can it be true that she and a certain young man

are about to leave the district.

**Mr Luke:**

Who’s the young man?

**Mrs Matthew:**

The joiner’s boy – Joseph.

**Mr Luke:**

Never!

**Mrs Matthew:**

Well, that’s what they say,

and I’m not one for gossip.

**Mr Luke:**

So, have you heard what they are saying about this so-called “census”?

**Mrs Matthew:**

No. Tell us...