**FOR THE WEEKEND OF DEC. 21-22, 2024**

Fourth Sunday in Advent

**Gospel Reading**

Lk 1:39-45

During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, “Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”

**Intercession**

As Mary did with Elizabeth, may be bring God to all we meet, including through a gift to the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

Good news is meant to be shared! Mary knew this when she visited her older cousin, Elizabeth. Both women were expecting. It was natural that they’d want to be together to share their joy and prepare for the coming births of their children.

Yet Mary’s visit to Elizabeth was more than shared joy. She also sought to help someone in need. Elizabeth, much older than her young cousin, required assistance during her pregnancy, and Mary did not hesitant to provide this aid – despite being pregnant herself and traveling a great distance to Elizabeth’s home.

Mary brings the light of Christ to her cousin. Elizabeth tells her that “the infant in my womb leaped for joy” at the sound of Mary’s greeting. What a beautifully appropriate Gospel reading, since Advent is a time of joyful anticipation.

Let us, like Mary, be barriers of Christ’s light to others. May we be generous of heart and eager of spirit, offering loving service this Advent by supporting the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

Jesus came to earth to lead us to the Father. In today’s Gospel, we see the beginning of this ministry with Mary bringing Christ to her cousin. She does this in a few ways. First, in visiting Elizabeth while pregnant, Mary literally brings Jesus to her. Elizabeth is so full of joy and the Holy Spirit, she cries out, “Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.” Second, Mary also brings Christ to her kinswoman through service. Mary’s love for her family compels her to action. She travels many miles to help her elderly cousin through an unexpected and probably difficult pregnancy. In doing so, she becomes a model of Christ’s future evangelization that centers on service to others. Mary lives Advent well. May we follow her example and bring Christ to others through support of the *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Rays of sunlight shining over an open field and a person praying

Header: “Blessed are you who believed” – Luke 1:45

Copy: Advent is a time of joyful anticipation of Christ’s coming and a time to not only count our blessings but share them, too! Please consider sharing your blessings with others by giving to our diocesan *Catholic Ministry Appeal*.