

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Blessed are you

INTRODUCTION

Mary was chosen to be the mother of Christ, and so became the mother of Christians everywhere. Filled with the Holy Spirit and understanding that nothing is impossible for God, she set off to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, to share her joy and wonder.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As the candles are lit, read this prayer:

If we keep our eyes on the light,
we need never feel afraid.
Jesus will walk before us,
guiding us through life
towards the kingdom of heaven.

SORRY

We, too, are filled with the Holy Spirit. He breathed new life into us at our baptism and shares his peace and love with us always. If we have turned away from God, let us ask him to work in our lives, so that we can follow Jesus more closely every day.

If I have made mistakes
and chosen the wrong way...
Father, forgive me.
If I have been unloving or selfish...
Jesus, forgive me.
When I find it difficult to choose God's way...
Spirit, give me your strength.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

As we welcome the Gospel sing the Advent Song.

GOSPEL (LUKE 1:39-45)

After the angel Gabriel had appeared to Mary, she set off at once to visit her cousin, Elizabeth. When Elizabeth saw Mary coming, she ran to welcome her, and the baby inside her leapt for joy at the sound of Mary's greeting.

Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and said to Mary, "Of all women you are the most blessed; and blessed is the child you will have

because you believe in the power of God, and he has chosen you to be the mother of our savior."

DISCUSSION

When Gabriel appeared to Mary, he told her that Elizabeth and her husband, Zechariah, were expecting a baby. Mary was surprised by this news because both Elizabeth and her husband were quite old and had never been able to have children. But Mary knew that nothing was impossible for God!

After the angel's visit, Mary immediately set off to visit Elizabeth. Mary's first thoughts were for her cousin, and being generous and kind, she was always ready to help in whatever way she could.

When Elizabeth and Mary met, Elizabeth was filled with understanding by the Holy Spirit; she, too, knew that nothing is impossible for God. Elizabeth also became aware that God had chosen Mary to be the mother of his son.

What do you think Mary and Elizabeth would have talked about together? They probably talked about the good news the angel brought them, and marveled together at the power of God.

Both of them were expecting their first child, and probably shared their feelings of excitement and joy as they waited for them to be born. Elizabeth and Mary knew that they had been chosen by God and that their children would be blessed by God in a very special way.

ACTIVITY

Put the finishing touches to the Jesse tree or Advent frieze so that they will be completed for Christmas day. Make a star for the tree or a picture of the Holy Family together, but do not add them to the activities until Christmas morning!

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us thank Mary for becoming the mother of Jesus and for sharing her son with the world as we say together:

Hail Mary....

