

Advent 4 – December 20, 2015

Scripture – Luke 1:39-55 (New International Readers' Version)

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in Judea's hill country. There she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby inside her jumped. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she called out, "God has blessed you more than other women. And blessed is the child you will have! But why is God so kind to me? Why has the mother of my Lord come to me? As soon as I heard the sound of your voice, the baby inside me jumped for joy. You are a woman God has blessed. You have believed that the Lord would keep his promises to you!"

Mary's Song

Mary said,

"My soul gives glory to the Lord.

My spirit delights in God my Savior.

He has taken note of me

even though I am not considered important.

From now on all people will call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me.

His name is holy.

He shows his mercy to those who have respect for him,

from parent to child down through the years.

He has done mighty things with his powerful arm.

He has scattered those who are proud in their deepest thoughts.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones.

But he has lifted up people who are not considered important.

He has filled with good things those who are hungry.

But he has sent away empty those who are rich.

He has helped the people of Israel, who serve him.

He has always remembered to be kind

to Abraham and his children down through the years.

He has done it just as he promised to our people of long ago."

Lesson to discuss as a family

Mary and Elizabeth were distant cousins, which is why Mary went to stay with her during her pregnancy. Because the baby inside Elizabeth (John) jumped when Mary approached pregnant with Jesus, this means that John knew he was in the presence of the Lord, even though the 2 of them were still in utero. And when Elizabeth felt the child inside her jump she was "filled with the Holy Spirit" and knew the entire backstory of Mary without being told.

God truly is at work here. Remember, Zechariah and Elizabeth were much too old, but still Elizabeth became pregnant with John. Because of this Elizabeth says, "Why is God so kind to me? Why has the mother of the Lord come to me?" It is because of Mary's faithfulness that she was able to give birth to our savior. Read the passage called "Mary's song" and talk about what Mary must have been feeling.

Activity Banner

Attach the picture of Mary and Elizabeth to the banner. Write down your prayers for Mary as you would have prayed for her at this time. Are they prayers of awe and wonder or prayers of thanksgiving?

Family Activity

Think about times that you have had to have great faith in God. Would you have trusted God as Mary did? Can you trust God enough that you don't worry about the future but instead focus on living now the life God wishes for you? Talk about ways that you can come together more closely as a family. God gives parents their children as gifts, but parents are gifts to their children as well. God puts together each family to love each other as he loves us. Just as God gave Jesus to Mary and made her the mother of our savior.