



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year C, Intermediate - RCLB Lectionary



### Intermediate Session

Micah 5:1-4a

Luke 1:39-45

### Opening Prayer

Let us pray the Hail Mary.

Hail Mary  
full of grace, the Lord is with you.  
Blessed are you among women  
and blessed is the fruit of your  
womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother  
of God, pray for us sinners now  
and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

### Opening Life Reflection



On this fourth Sunday of Advent we prepare for the coming of Christ in the flesh. To begin the session, have the children create a nativity scene. Use a box to hold the figures. Write *Bethlehem* on the box. Provide clay for each child. Write the list of characters on a chart, including Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, angels, shepherds, sheep and other animals. Invite the children to create a nativity scene. (Play appropriate Christmas music softly in background.) Discuss:

- Which character in the nativity scene inspires you the most? Explain why.
- Why is the birth of Jesus "Good News?"
- What have you done to prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus?

The focus for this last Sunday of Advent is the awesome mystery of God being born of flesh, the birth of Jesus.

### Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading, listen as the prophet Micah tells us about a ruler who is to come.

Read Micah 5:1-4a.



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Allow for silence.

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### **Scripture Discussion Starters**

- Where will the ruler come from?
- What are the people waiting being compared to?
- How is the ruler described?

In the gospel reading today Mary takes a journey to see Elizabeth. Listen to the joyful visit. Read Luke 1:39-45.

Allow for silence.

- What happens to Elizabeth when she hears Mary's greeting?
- What does Elizabeth call Mary?
- How does Elizabeth know that Mary is to be the mother of the Lord?

### **Scripture Background**

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

In the Old Testament reading today the people of Israel are promised a ruler who will stand firm with the strength of God. The prophet Micah, who is a great preacher of social justice, announces that the king who will rule in the line of David will come from the small insignificant place of Bethlehem-Ephratha. This promised ruler will shepherd the people.

In the gospel reading today, Mary who is pregnant with Jesus travels to visit Elizabeth, who is also with child. We sense the expectancy of the journey and the excitement of the arrival when Mary greets Elizabeth. The infant in Elizabeth's womb leaps for joy when she hears Mary's greeting. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and she speaks a profound truth calling Mary blessed and the Mother of the Lord.

Today's gospel reading exposes the awesome mystery of the incarnation -- God made flesh in the birth of Jesus. On this fourth Sunday of Advent, the gospel announces the great event of Christ's coming in the flesh.

### **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- Do you enjoy visiting friends or family members who live far away?
  - Can you relate to the joy that Elizabeth felt when Mary visited her?
  - What does the birth of Jesus mean to you?
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- Are you ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus this Christmas?

*If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.*

### **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

#### **The coming of Christ in the flesh**

During the season of Advent we focus on the coming of Christ. The four Sundays of Advent move from looking forward to the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time when the Reign of God is fully established, to the coming of Christ in our midst proclaimed by John the Baptist. This fourth Sunday of Advent we focus on the coming of Christ in human flesh. We celebrate the birth of a Savior foretold by the prophets, Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace.

Jesus is both human and divine. The humanity of Jesus helps us to find the sacredness in our own humanness. In the person of Jesus, God and humankind come together in perfect unity.

- What can you do to spread the joy of the birth of Jesus this Christmas?
- What does the divinity of Jesus mean to you?
- What does the humanity of Jesus mean to you?

#### **The Gospel in Life**

Spread the joy of Christmas by calling or visiting a friend or family member who lives far away.