



a Kendall Hunt Company

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year C, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Micah 5:1-4a

Luke 1:39-45

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Come, Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace,

may your presence heal the violence in our hearts and bring about justice in our world.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

On the fourth and last Sunday of Advent the readings call our attention to the birth of Jesus. For this session a Nativity scene and Christmas music that relates to the birth of Jesus playing in the background will help to set the tone. Provide each young person with a candle. Begin the session by focusing on the awesome mystery of God being born in the flesh, the birth of Jesus. Invite each young person to reflect on where the peace of Christ is needed today.

Discuss:

- Where is the peace of Christ needed today, in our hearts, our homes, our schools, and in the world?

Then take a moment for silent reflection on the question. Then light each person's candle saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace." As each candle is lit, invite the young people to quietly bring forth a prayer request for peace by placing their candle before Jesus, in the Nativity scene. Conclude with the good news that today we celebrate the light that has come into the world, Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to the promise of a ruler who shall be peace.

Read Micah 5:1-4a.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

• Where will the ruler who is promised come from?

• Who will give him strength?

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• What kind of a ruler will he be?

In the gospel reading today, Mary visits Elizabeth. Listen to the joy they share.

Read Luke 1:39-45.

Allow for silence.

- What happens when Mary greets Elizabeth?
- What does Elizabeth say to Mary?
- How does Elizabeth know that Mary is the mother of the Lord?
- Why does Elizabeth call Mary blessed?

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

- How does Jesus bring you peace?
- What does the awesome mystery of God being born of flesh mean to you?
- How will you 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

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During the season of Advent we focus on the coming of Christ. The four Sundays of Advent—have moved us 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. On 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.

- How does the birth of Christ bring holiness to all of humanity?
- Does the humanity of Christ help you relate to Jesus as a friend? Explain.

The Gospel in Life

Bring the light of Christ's peace to those you meet this Christmas.

