

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

Written by Sr. Mary Elizabeth Looby, GNSH

First Reading: [Micah 5:1-4a](#)

Responsorial Psalm [80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19](#)

Second Reading: [Hebrews 10:5-10](#)

Gospel: [Luke 1:39-45](#)



*Visitation explodes in joy! Elizabeth recognized her as the Mother of God.*

Mary said, “Yes! I am God’s own” and the angel left her. The angel left as quietly as he had come, leaving her to hold the precious treasure of God’s promise. Did she continue to ponder as was her pattern? Surely wonder filled her being.

So much filled her heart and head. Who to tell about this encounter? How to tell them about what had happened to her? Her parents, Anne and Joachim, and Joseph, all need to know! When to tell them? She must have taken some time to just celebrate the invitation and gift, and shape her sharing with those significant to her.

She must go to Elizabeth to share her awesome news and to celebrate and assist her in the final months of her pregnancy. Elizabeth is older and in her first pregnancy, and is 90 miles away! Plans must be made. It’s not likely she could travel alone; the road is not safe for a young woman to travel alone for several days.

Tender conversations with Anne and Joachim were needed. They would understand angel encounters. They knew about her coming to them by virtue of angel visitations. Would they support her going to Elizabeth for three months? And Joseph, ah Joseph, would he still want her, support her, understand such awesome news plus the need to visit Elizabeth? I imagine those conversations happening in awed tones, triggering mixed thoughts and feelings!

Plans were made for her travel. Elizabeth’s condition was known now. Wonder, charity, and need prompted her traveling there. Mary’s excitement heightened as she drew near Elizabeth and Zachariah’s home.

*Visitation explodes in joy!* Elizabeth recognized her as the Mother of God. She had to say nothing! Elizabeth knew! What a relief, what a joy! Both women glowing in pregnancy and in celebration of what God was doing in them! *Let us magnify the Lord with them!*

### **For pondering:**

1. Imagine the conversations of Mary with her parents and Joseph.
2. Imagine the relief of Mary as she greeted Elizabeth.
3. Have a dialogue with one of them, or some of them. Speak to them as one speaks to a friend. You know these people and this story. Have them fill you in on the fuller aspects of the encounters.

Image credit: *Jump for Joy*, Corby Eisbacher, artist