

**THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**  
**December 19, 2021**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
**Micah 5:1–4a † Hebrews 10:5–10 † Luke 1:39–45**



**Reflection by: Dyann Brown, OPA**

In today's gospel, the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Mary, after receiving God's favor to be the mother of the Son of God, visits her cousin Elizabeth whose long-barren womb has now too been favored by God. Their exchanged greetings were a powerful blessing for both women. Even Elizabeth's unborn child also leapt in joy to acknowledge in whose presence they were. In that moment, Elizabeth exclaimed to Mary, "Blessed be the fruit of thy womb!" What an astounding welcome Mary must have felt hearing her cousin's reverent endorsement as she worried about her holy and blessed task.

Yet, Advent also means the second coming of Jesus Christ and we pray and rejoice for that arrival. Our Lord was born, died and resurrected for us. During His life on Earth, Mary felt a mother's pride witnessing her child's love and care of others. She also witnessed His pain, death and resurrection for our salvation.

As we near the crest of this Advent Season, some of us are in the advent of soul-seeking and reflection on what is to come; some are in the advent of facing increasing health challenges; some are in the advent of living with less and feeling isolated; and some, the barrenness of joy in this season of holy anticipation. Yet, know you are indescribably loved because the Son of God welcomes you even when you are not feeling worthy of His rich and warm embrace. The Mother of God intercedes for you and loves you. The Fruit of her womb will not abandon you.

Merry Christ-mas and may God bless us, everyone.