

4th Sunday of Advent by Father Dave

In the first reading from the Old Testament prophet Micah, Micah gives assurance to the Jews that God is faithful to His promises, and that from the unimportant village of Bethlehem He will send them the long-expected ruler. The third stanza from today's Responsorial (Psalm 80) is a prayer for God's blessing upon the Davidic king. The selection from the Letter to the Hebrews reminds us that it is Jesus Christ Who offered the perfect sacrifice of obedience that liberated us from sin. By His willingness and eagerness to do God's will, Christ offered Himself in the place of all the other ritual sacrifices offered, as the means of sanctification.

In the Gospel selection from Luke, Luke tells us how two seemingly insignificant women met to celebrate the kindness and fidelity of God. It shows us how sensitive Mary was to the needs of Elizabeth, her older cousin, who had miraculously become pregnant in her old age. For Luke, discipleship consists in listening to God's word and then carrying it out, and Mary does both, to become the most perfect disciple.

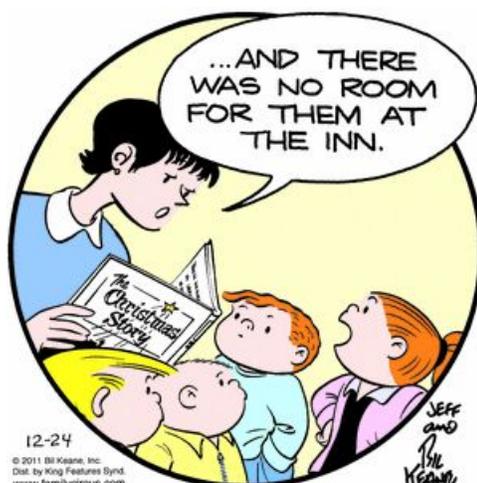
For us, today, the story of the Visitation which we read in this weekend's Gospel is more than a nice story. It is an invitation to deepen our faith and trust in God's love. It is a call to recognize the presence of Christ in the people whom we meet, and to allow Jesus to shine through our often fragile human lives. Mary and Elizabeth were unique in what God asked of them. We too have a unique calling. As someone once said, we are all meant to be mothers of God, because Jesus needs to be continually born in our lives.

Christmas is the ideal time for us to be filled with the spirit of Christ, allowing His rebirth within us. Once Christ is reborn in us, He enables us to share His love with all those we encounter by offering them humble and committed service, unconditional forgiveness and compassionate and caring love. Let us take the time to visit others during this Christmas Season, especially the sick and shut-ins, sharing with them some inspiration for their lives, and hopefully bringing them closer to God.

Next weekend, when you arrive for the Weekend Mass, Christmas will have already been celebrated. And so that we do not forget - On behalf of the Parish Staff, our thanks to each of you for all that you do for our Parish, and may the Lord's blessings continue to be upon each of you now and always.

A Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year to You and Yours!

Let us pray for the Conversion of the World
& for Peace



12-24
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"Joseph should've just gone online and booked a room before they left."

BULLETIN REFLECTION

by Father Rody

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THE VISITATION ACCOUNT

I wish to start with the question ***‘What could I possibly bring when I will visit this person?’***

The last time I went home for vacation July 01-Aug. 27, 2021, I brought with me bags of goods from Save-A-Lot, Walmart, Giant Eagle, Dollar Tree, Aldi, Sam’s, Ebay and Amazon...*well represented as if bringing America to Philippines LOL.* After the ‘what’ the next thing to face is the ‘why’...***Why did I bring those things?***

In the gospel reading first we need to address, ***‘What*** did Mary bring to her relative Elizabeth?’

GOSPEL VERSE 43 And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Mama Mary brought God in her visit to Elizabeth. The God is in her womb yet.

Now we finally address the question, ‘Why did Mary bring God to Elizabeth?’

GOSPEL VERSES 40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. **41** When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, **the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit,**

WHY? It is because Mama Mary wanted to share to others her own experience on what it means to have God in her life. Why did I bring those things in the Philippines? It is because of the term deprivation, I want to share to my love ones what I am experiencing here.

Mama Mary doesn’t want us to be deprived of God’s presence in our very own self...Mama Mary shares her joy to each one of us...see the effects on Elizabeth (her baby leaped---shall I say leaped of joy...and Elizabeth herself was filled with the Holy Spirit).

The Visitation Account is the narration of experience when you have God in your very self...that you cannot contain God (self as a vessel) God overflows eventually thus you might as well share God to others. Even with the things we have, when you start sharing them to those who are deprived (or may have barely)...Oh my! The happiness you could create on them is unimaginable. Go visit them and give them reason to be happy.

