

December 19, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Mi 5:1-4

Heb 10:5-10

Lk 1:39-45

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

GROW:

“You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah
too small to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel;”

We do not have to go see the most recent superhero movie, or binge-watch a streaming TV series that celebrates the underdog to feel the elation that comes with overcoming evil. We need only to look at our own lives, and God’s plan of salvation for us, to understand what it truly means to be triumphant. From tiny little Bethlehem – a town of no consequence – would arise the Savior of the world. He would be the One who came to do God’s will, and thus consecrated us to God through the offering of his own body as sacrifice, once for all. This is the One Mary carried in her womb and whom Elizabeth’s unborn child – we know to be John the Baptist – recognized. He is the child-most-vulnerable who would become King of the Universe, “stand[ing] firm and shepherd[ing] his flock by the strength of the Lord.” This is the God we serve: the One who became like us so that we may one day be like him. We shall soon celebrate the anniversary of his birth, while also waiting in joyful hope for his coming again. In this time of preparation, then, we pray for the grace to know the Lord more fully and to appreciate with gratitude the Savior he truly is.

GO EVANGELIZE | PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

GO: As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, now is the time many of us will begin to gather – as families, friends, and faith communities. What an ideal opportunity to renew our relationships with one another and with Jesus, asking the Holy Spirit to help us recognize the presence of God in our lives and in others. Micah’s prophesy from today’s first reading endures: “His greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace.” Let’s do our part to share the peace and joy of Christ with those we encounter, witnessing to his saving grace in our lives, and offering others an opportunity to be a part of the greatest story, ever – of God’s saving action.

INVITE/PRAY: Invite visiting family members to your parish or faith community for a concert, worship or other Advent activity. If that’s not possible, pray the O Antiphons together at home.