

# Young Adult Reflection

## December 20, 2009

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christ: Our Hope and Light in the Darkness

One thing that is associated with the celebration of Christmas everywhere is giving. Santa Claus is the perfect symbol of Christmas because Santa is the one who gives and gives and never seems to get tired of giving. Christmas is a feast of giving even from God's point of view. If Christmas is the feast of giving, then the question of what to give and how to give becomes very important. How can we improve on the quality of our Christmas celebration? Today's Gospel reading helps us to answer these questions.

Happy Christmas to each and every one of you!

### Gospel

Lk 1:39-45

Mary set out  
and traveled to the hill country in haste  
to a town of Judah,  
where she entered the house of Zechariah  
and greeted Elizabeth.  
When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,  
the infant leaped in her womb,  
and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit,  
cried out in a loud voice and said,  
"Blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.  
And how does this happen to me,  
that the mother of my Lord should come to me?  
For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears,  
the infant in my womb leaped for joy.  
Blessed are you who believed  
that what was spoken to you by the Lord  
would be fulfilled."

There is a story about a four year old girl with a very busy father. He made a lot of money but spent very little time with his family. Every night, however, the girl insisted that her father read her a story before she goes to sleep. And so it went each evening until the man found a "solution." He bought his daughter a tape player and made tapes of her favorite stories. Whenever she asks him to read her a story now, he simply pushes the button and plays back the tape-recorded stories. The girl thought it was ok

for a few days but then revolted and no longer wanted the stories on tape. "Why," asked the father, "the tape reads the stories as well as I do!" "Yes," replied the little girl, "But I can't sit on its lap."

What gift did Mary bring to Elizabeth? We are told she brought just one thing: herself. She gave Elizabeth the gift of her very presence. This is often the best and one of the very hardest gifts to give. It is easy to send flowers, it is easy to wrap a present, but to give the gift of ourselves, to take the time to be with somebody, that is the gift that many people long for but do not receive at Christmas. In the story above, the father gave his little girl a tape recorder and made story-tapes for her, but he did not give her himself, his presence, his time.

Today, everybody needs the interior peace and joy that comes from the Holy Spirit. This is what Mary's visit did for Elizabeth. Mary's visit was an inspiration to Elizabeth. When we visit people this Christmas, let us try to bring some inspiration into their lives, let us seek to bring them closer to God, and let us try to share with them the Spirit of God in us, the Spirit of consolation, of courage, of peace and joy, just as Mary did.