

Reflections on 4th Sunday of Advent Year 24C.

Mass: Micah 5:1-4; Psalm 79; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45.

We move into the second part of Advent now. The first part asks us to be aware of what is going on around us while keeping our eye on the promise of God to restore his People and his world. Today we focus on a young woman who drops everything, despite herself being pregnant, to go to the assistance of her elderly cousin, Elizabeth. She brings more than material help; she brings new hope and joy. Elizabeth's child leaps with joy in her womb. Perhaps she had been worrying whether her child would survive, given her advanced age. Now she knows that God has given her life, and in return recognises the life that Mary bears is greater than even her own. We must not lose sight of what we have learnt already. The determination of asylum seekers, the rebuilders of broken roads, the possibility of corrupt officials becoming just. Now we hear of the sadness of children's lives cut short and the need to protect young lives. The unborn in the Gospel speak of the calling or vocation that God has destined for each of us. As we see lives cut short, we realise the importance of nurturing that vocation in each one of us.