

**Advent 4 – 19<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

**Read Luke 1.39-45 (46-55)**

***You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.***

How do you greet other people? Do you say “Hello”, shake hands, give them a hug or kiss? Has the way you greet other people changed over the last two years? We have all had to be more careful because of the COVID pandemic.

Many years ago I went on holiday to Iceland with my family. I listened to the people in the hotel and in the street greeting each other. They seemed to be saying “Bless”. I’m sure that they were using an Icelandic word for “Hello” but it sounded like our word “Bless”. I thought that it was a lovely idea – to bless someone that you are meeting.



In today’s reading from St Luke’s gospel Mary has found out that she is pregnant with the Son of God. She goes to see her cousin Elizabeth who greets her with the words “Mary, you are blessed because you believed God’s promise”. Mary then praises God for the blessing that she has received. How do you think Mary felt when she met Elizabeth and was blessed by her?

Are there times when you have felt blessed by God, or by other people? You may have noticed all sorts of blessings in your life; delicious food, beautiful countryside, good friends, loving family. It feels good to know that God cares for us so much that he blesses us. God’s love surrounds each one of us. How can we share these blessings with other people?

Christmas is a time when we send greetings and presents to our friends and family. This is a form of blessing. But we can also pass on blessings in smiles, kind words, offers of help. Can you think of other ways to pass on God’s blessing to others?

I hope that you and your family have a happy and blessed Christmas.

### **Activities**

- The week before Christmas can be a busy time. Can you guess how many people you might come into contact with in some way, e.g. on a bus, in the supermarket or at school? This week, challenge yourself to treat every greeting as a chance to bless someone new, wish them a Merry Christmas, share a smile or offer to help when needed.
- During this week listen to the song “10,000 Reasons” by Matt Redman and think of all the blessings in your life. How many reasons to bless God can you think of?

### **Prayer**

Holy Spirit, through smiles and greetings to those we meet: may we be a blessing.

Through encouragement and warm words: may we be a blessing.

Through helping hands and generous spirits; may we be a blessing. Amen