

# Third Sunday in Advent



Giovanni Balducci, *The Visitation of the Virgin to Saint Elizabeth*, the Met Museum

**I**n the Gospels this week, we hear about Mary visiting her kinswoman Elizabeth. Elizabeth was much older than Mary and it was a miracle she had also conceived a baby. **Elizabeth and her husband** Zecharaiah were parents of John the Baptist. Unlike Mary, Zecharaiah did not believe when an angel revealed to him that his wife would bear a son and name him John. When he doesn't believe the angel, he is struck dumb until he confirms the name John at his son's circumcision. Elizabeth is the patron saint of pregnant women and infertile couples.

**"Zechariah's doubts and his need for explanations contrast with the 'yes' of Mary, who asks only to know how everything spoken to her was to come about. Zechariah could not overcome his desire to control everything; he could not abandon the mindset of someone needing to be responsible for making things happen. Mary did not hesitate or think about herself: instead, she surrendered herself; she trusted."**

(Pope Francis, September 5, 2019)

## A Prayer for Life

Father and maker of all,  
you adorn all creation  
with splendor and beauty,  
and fashion human lives  
in your image and likeness.  
Awaken in every heart  
reverence for the work of your hands,  
and renew among your people  
a readiness to nurture and sustain  
your precious gift of life.

**Grant this through our Lord**  
Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in  
the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God forever and ever.  
Amen

—from *Catholic Household  
Blessings & Prayers*



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