



PRAY, PONDER, PREACH AND PRACTICE THE WORD OF GOD

Facilitated by Racine Dominican Preaching Committee January 2020

Peekaboo

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We all know the game. You hide behind a pillow, or a newspaper...then you peek out and let your face be seen...and the little child squeals with delight. The scriptures say it this way: "Show us your face, Lord, and we shall be saved!"

We are in the season of the Light, the Christmas/Epiphany season of the Church Year. The Light has come, but these weeks ahead are like a game of Peekaboo. It all began with Mary, who is amazed at the plan. She says, "OK, let it be..." and with these words she echoes the very words of creation in Genesis: "Let there be...Light!" and a new creation begins, growing for nine months in her womb. Then Joseph is brought in...then at the birth, the shepherds; then the Magi, representing all the nations. Next comes the apostles coming into the Light at the Wedding of Cana, and finally to all the Jewish nation at the Baptism of Jesus. Now the Light is out in the open...and as the Church Year flows on, we will see the game turn violent. We will try to rid ourselves of the Light as the Paschal Mystery draws us into the Lenten season.

Little by little, the Divine Game unfolds as if the Revealer knows we can only take so much at one time before we blink, overwhelmed. We have learned to avoid the Light. We have learned to hide, ashamed of our darkness, of our weakness, of our ignorance, of our blindness. But the Light comes gently, like a rose tapping on the window pane of our awareness, hoping we will open to its fragrance and smile.

So as this Divine Game goes on, may we not only smile, may we squeal with delight. May the Light weave us 'round about and steal kisses...may it tickle us until we are weak, until we are swept up in its arms and carried off safe, healed, and secure. For this is what it means to be saved.



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O wondrous Love,  
Hiding in our very humanness...  
Peeking out to charm us...  
Drawing us into your game.  
Coming to woo us as a baby!  
Is this the way for a God to act?  
But you hide...  
And we seek...  
Ending up caught  
And wrapped around your little baby finger.

*Special thanks to associate Connie Roybal for these reflections.*

### **January 5 – The Epiphany of the Lord – Is. 60:1-6 – Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 – Matt. 1:1-12**

The Greek word for Epiphany can be translated “striking revelation.” It brought to mind Paul’s words in today’s Second Reading: “...it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.” This was, indeed, a striking revelation, especially to faithful Jews! “We” are the Gentiles. “We” are the nations brought to the Lord by our Jewish brothers and sisters! Our hearts should “throb and overflow” (today’s First Reading). Every human being on the planet is beloved of God and deserving of our respect. Can we? Can I?

### **January 12 – The Baptism of the Lord – Is. 42:1-4,6-7 – Acts 10:34-38 – Matt. 3:13-17**

“...a bruised reed he shall not break, a smoldering wick he shall not quench, until he establishes justice on the earth.” (From the First Reading) What we accomplish is not what is important, but rather what God accomplishes through us. We need to treat each other tenderly, knowing that the power of God, present in Jesus, is ours, only when our hearts toward each other are tender and caring. Every heart needs tenderness. John’s humble words echo in our hearts: “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?” So does Jesus’ reply: “Allow it for now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” At this moment – the moment at which Jesus begins his public ministry – the plan requires Jesus to submit himself to John for baptism so that he might receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit. God will announce Jesus’ unique relationship with the Father. Christ humbles himself in order to identify with all those who have come seeking the Baptism of Repentance.” ...a bruised reed he shall not break....”

### **January 19 – Ordinary Time – Is. 49:3, 5-6 – 1Corinthians 1:1-3 – John 1:29-34**

“It is too little, the Lord says, for you to be my servant...I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.” (Is 49:6) Indeed, “God is [our] strength” and any glory that comes to us is a reflection of the Glorious God, who calls us and takes what little we can accomplish and makes it amazing. Let us marvel at the human spirit that keeps on keeping on in the face of what sometimes seem like overwhelming odds and let us know that we do not labor alone. Not only is the Master making miracles with our toil, but we, toiling together, are making miracles for our God. We are blessed and we are blessing! A light to the nations! We have obligations: To see God’s glory, to show God’s glory, to be God’s glory to the ends of the earth!

### **January 26 – Ordinary Time – Is. 8:23-9:3 – 1Corinthians 1:10-13, 17 – Matt. 4:12-23**

“I urge you brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose.” (1 Cor. 1:10) We are urged to work together to accomplish the tasks placed in our hands by our God. Isaiah tells us that “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.” We have the task and we have the light. What is the task? How and to what is Jesus calling you? Can you hear him? Among all the voices that call to you, which is Christ’s voice? A conundrum... Maybe hearing Him say to Peter, Andrew, James and John in the Gospel, “Come after me and I will make you fishers of people” helps us to figure out exactly what our task is – to be available to people. First of all, the people in our own lives, but all people are needy in one way or another, even though some don’t realize it, and look askance at a hand held out to them. How does one become a “fisher of people”? I suppose that one way to get started is to respond to the needs of people around you...listening, hearing, doing, caring...to discover the needs and respond to the call to meet those needs. The closer the need, the more compelling it is. The only commandment that Jesus ever gave us was “Love one another, as I have loved you.” When we realize that He died for us, that commandment is pretty intense!