



PRAY, PONDER, PREACH AND PRACTICE THE WORD OF GOD

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All shall be well....?

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What makes it possible, when all is chaos around us, when war is present, when the virus persists, when corruption abounds...to cling firmly in faith? We are told we are to trust. What makes it possible for us to do this?

The sacred texts this month will speak of perseverance to the very end. We will be remembering our loved ones who have gone on into a type of life beyond our present experience. In the face of the losses that death inflicts upon us, what will prevent us from scattering like a flock of frightened sheep?

One thing only...the assurance given us by the enduring presence of the Word. We are told to grab hold of him, to hide our frightened faces in his tunic, near to his heart. We are told to take refuge in the reality of a mystery many of us spend a good part of our lives trying to absorb.

He will be with us, he says, until the end of the age. "You in me, and I in you," he says. What would happen in my life if this day, this week, this month, I took that with utter seriousness? Yes, you feel it too...first, we would calm down. It's called the peace of assurance. It's his Easter gift. We can't create it. It's what his presence brings. All the outer noise dims. His presence is pure power. Wherever he is, there is a stillness, a sacred quiet. This is my call during this final month of the liturgical year. Walking amidst the chaos and remembering those who have entered eternal life, I am to school myself in the fact of his presence. In this faith-fact I am to walk.



*My fear would send me into a panic attack...No, you say?
Instead, "Come to me...I am always at home...with you," you say.
"Live on in me...come home."*

Special thanks to S. Joyce Ballweg for these reflections.

November 1—Book of Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14; I Letter of St. John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12a

Angels, People of God, Communion of Saints, Blessed are we! We are marked with the seal of God, so how do we display this wondrous gift? Daily we have the opportunity to live with the attitude of being! "Blessed are we!" Blessed are the poor in spirit; ...peacemakers; ...merciful; ...meek; ...clean of heart; ...those who mourn; ...who hunger and thirst and are persecuted for the sake of righteousness. During this election week and the weeks ahead, we are invited to intentionally live the beatitudes.

November 8—Book of Wisdom 6:12-16; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

Things change, life unfolds, constantly evolving! Always, we need to be prepared for the unexpected. Living wisely is a challenge! Wisdom is a gift. How frequently we miss the boat! We have our lamps but no oil! The door closes! Unless we contemplate, absorb and fully accept the glorious reality that “God’s dwelling is with the human race” (Rev. 21:3), the gift of wisdom will be evasive. So we pray, “Lady Wisdom, help us fill our flasks with oil. Journey with us as we sail on the calm waters, as well as on the dangerous high waves through the darkness.”

**November 15—Book of Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20,30-31;
I Thessalonians 5:1-5; Matthew 25:14-30**

What kind of excuses do we give when challenged about not responsibly using the gifts we have been endowed with? Even the smallest interaction, be it a nod, a smile, a greeting or the simplest gesture/comment that brings laughter, joy or surprise into the lives of another are ways of sharing our talents. Presence is gift! A gift is only a gift if it is given! Hiding or burying our talents is not an option, for we are people of light. Find worthy friends whose value is far beyond pearls. Together we can companion one another through our challenging situations, broken systems and shattered world by using our talents.

November 22—Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17; I Corinthians 15:20-26. 28;Matthew 25:31-46

In God’s tenderness, we will continually be cared for! Lost, we will be searched for! Get off track, we will be guided. Nervous, scared or upset, we will be soothed and comforted. Injured, laughed at, or abandoned, we will be healed, loved and find a welcoming “home!” God is our Shepherd, and we are invited to help with the shepherding responsibilities. Who are our hungry, thirsty, naked, imprisoned, and/or strangers? Their cries shatter the stars! They plead and cry out to have their basic human needs met. How long will it take before we respond? If we listen with “the ear of our heart,” we will be able to shepherd with compassion, care and guidance. This week consider sharing with someone what you did or ask someone what they did in tending to another’s need.

November 29—Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b, 64:2-7; I Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:37-37

As darkness closes in on us, may we be light for the blinded, hope for the hopeless, and expectation for the downtrodden. “Take us, mold us and fashion us. You are the potter that forms us. We are the work of your hands.” In so many ways we are a “piece of art!” Each of us are so uniquely formed, fashioned and re-formed. During the Advent season, we have the opportunity to polish the multi-facet gem that we are and reshape our lives so that the Light of Christ will glow through us. At the beginning of this month, we were invited to reflect upon the “Be-attitudes”; now as we begin this Advent season we are asked to “Be watchful, Be alert!” as we continue our journey dancing to the rhythm of the Potter.

