



PRAY, PONDER, PREACH AND PRACTICE THE WORD OF GOD

Facilitated by Racine Dominican Preaching Committee *January 2025*

Peek-a-Boo Time

By S. Carla Mae Streeter

It is the time in the Liturgical Year just after Christmas. It's that little patch of Ordinary Time just before Lent. Ever wonder why this little patch appears? Ordinary Time appears after the two major Feasts: Christmas and Easter. Each has a purpose. The little patch after Christmas is "Show-Time," and the long Ordinary Time after Easter is "Formation in Discipleship" Time.

So what are we being 'shown?' What are we to encounter? It's fascinating... as if God is playing Peek-a-Boo with us as a new-born would...! First, he hides in Mary's womb; then he lets Joseph in on the game. Then the shepherds arrive, and we learn God's preference for the poor ones, the no-accounts. But the educated and wealthy are invited too, and then the Magi appear...then Simeon and Anna and the Baptizer and the Jews get a peek; finally, he reveals himself to those who are going to reach the rest of the world, his Apostles. He reveals himself at a wedding. A wedding? Don't miss it... it's intentional. The wine runs out. Mary is there and seems to have some say over the servants. Jesus seems to be unconcerned. Mary knows better, and tells the servants to do whatever he tells them. They fill the water pots with water and ask the steward to taste it. He goes immediately to the bridegroom who declares it the best wine of all...! And this becomes the best part of the Peek-a-Boo Game...because he took the water-made-wine to the wrong bridegroom...! The real Bridegroom is standing there watching their joy, for the secret is out. He has come to claim his bride; the Prince has arrived to claim his Cinderella. Prepare to be wooed...!

"May I have this dance?" He said.

I blushed, not fitly clothed.

He looked beyond my rags held out his hand and waited.

What was I to do?

*My hand in his I would be a queen...my garb transformed
my slippers clear to see the much-loved earth beneath.*

*No mid-night curse has stopped this music for we are dancing still...
and I am learning who I am in the mirror of his eyes.*

Thank you to Associate Lisa Marie Duffield for this month's reflections.

The Epiphany of the Lord | January 5, 2025 | Is 60:1-6

"Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! ... Raise your eyes and look about."

Sometimes in our faith life, we get stuck in If..Then thinking. If I am faithful, then God will bless me. If we make the right choice, then good things will happen. And of course, if we make the wrong choice, or if we do nothing, then we are doomed to walk in darkness. But Isaiah reminds us that we do not have that kind of power. The Glory and the Blessing are there. We are called to see.

Where do I need to let go of control? Where do I notice the presence of God?

Baptism of the Lord | January 12, 2025 | Is 40:1-11

"Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God."

While the winter solstice has passed and the days are becoming incrementally longer, we are still in the dark days of the year. A warm fire, a warm heating vent, a warm cup of coffee, cider, or hot chocolate – these creature comforts bring comfort not only to our bodies, but also to our spirits. Likewise, the Spirit of Christmas lives in the kindness that we offer to those around us. Even the manifestation of the Holy Spirit came with words of praise: "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

How can I be a comfort to those around me?

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time | January 19, 2025 | Ps 96

"Proclaim his marvelous deeds to all the nations."

Our God is perfect and holy. But our Church is not. Sometimes we get caught in the web of imperfections, and though our hearts are steadfast, we are frustrated with the things that need to change in our community, our family, our church, and our world. But Jesus did not begin there. He began with celebration and connection, changing the ritual cleansing water into a delicious gift of celebration.

What areas of my life need more celebration?

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time | January 26, 2025 | Lk 4:14-21

"Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

It is popular in our culture to take up a new diet plan or habit lists at this time of year, and then again every few weeks, in order to fix something about our selves or our lives that we don't like. The Law is not like that. The Spirit of God transforms our very hearts, and we who are transformed shine a new light.

When I contemplate on the presence of Jesus, what is fulfilled in me?