



Racine Dominicans  
Committed to Truth + Compelled to Justice

# PRAY, PONDER, PREACH AND PRACTICE THE WORD OF GOD

Facilitated by Racine Dominican Preaching Committee December 2021

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## *Hope as Heartache*

The season of longing is here. We know what heartache is. We so long for COVID to end. We long for its restrictions to be lifted. We long for the chaos at the border to be addressed. We long for Tegrey to get the food its people need...that the religious terrorism that now rules Afghanistan be gone...that Haiti have order...that our congress can once again really function...that the scars of our racism give way to a new order.

We stand with Mary as she longs to see the face of the mysterious baby that has come to make its home in her. We see our own baptismal call in the stark figure of John and he issues his wake-up call to set things right. We settle in with the barren trees and the leafless bushes and the cold of winter, and we wait. Love lights its lamp of faith and waits in hope.

Hope is expectant. It is built on the assurance that counts on promise. A promise has been made. We can count on it. We can count on the One who has given his word. The darkness of the absence of God will not last. We wait...and whistle in the dark.

Hope is light. It dances. It might even giggle. It knows something it cannot yet see, so there is that knowing little smile while it goes about the day-to-day. Was Mary humming while she did her laundry and baked her bread...?

*I know you're there.  
I see you up to your usual game of hide-and-seek.  
You hide and I seek.  
I am filled with longing.  
My heart aches for justice...  
I hope for healing for all of humanity...  
May my longing empty me out  
Making room for what you want to give.  
Clean out my stable-soul.  
Bring in fresh straw so we can hide and play peek-a-boo,  
And you can again wrap me around your little baby finger.*

*Thank you to S. Pat Mapes for the December Reflections.*

### **December 5, 2021**

#### **Second Sunday of Advent | Luke 3: 1-6**

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Where, in all the hustle and bustle of modern life, do we find a holy place, a place where we can be apart and encounter God daily? The paths I follow are often crooked, diverting me from my eternal goal. In Advent, I am called upon to open up the royal road to my own heart so that Jesus may be re-birthed in me. What can I do to make my path to God straight?

### **December 12, 2021**

#### **Third Sunday of Advent | Luke 3: 10-18**

The crowds, tax-collectors and soldiers asked John, “What should we do?” John responded with directness and clarity. “Don’t cheat, share your surplus, don’t exploit people.” John the Baptist lived a life of passionate commitment. His passion for justice and honesty spoke to the hearts of the crowds. At this mid-point of Advent, I ask myself today, what must I do to follow you with wholehearted commitment? What is my reaction to John’s words? Does it lead me to want to live a life of justice and integrity?

### **December 19, 2021**

#### **Fourth Sunday of Advent | Luke 1: 39-45**

“Blessed are you among women.” What a wonderful encounter: two women, bound by kinship, both bearing sons, both blest by the God. Do I have someone with whom I can share what God is doing in my life? Can others share their news with me? How do I bless the women in my life?

### **December 26, 2021**

#### **Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

##### **Luke 2: 41-52**

A missing child is a parent’s worst nightmare, panic leading to a frantic search. Mary and Joseph are frantically searching for Jesus and when they found him, Mary scolded him and said, “Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.” Jesus’ reply was, “Why? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” Where do we search for God in our lives? Jesus knew his real home was with the Father. What has bound up your life, stifled your growth, and kept you from the Father’s home? What might you have to leave behind in order to grow up and move to a better place? To the Father’s home?

