



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

*Facilitated by Racine Dominican Preaching Committee*     *January 2021*

## **You are a Hidden God**

A new year has dawned, and in the midst of the pandemic's hold we know healing is out there, hidden in the laboratories struggling to produce the help the world needs. So much is hidden in our day-to-day lives.

Could this be the reason the Word, who pressed our humanity to itself, chose thirty years of hiddenness? It's certainly not the way we would plan a redemption. Thirty years, and the only detail we have is when the child got 'lost' and caused his parents unbelievable pain?

Perhaps there is more here than we might think as we hurry on through this little snatch of ordinary time to the great season of lent. But, to think of it, these hidden years of the life of Jesus have much to tell us. The liturgical readings of January might serve us well if we look for 'hidden treasure.'

The ordinary is just so...ordinary. We take it for granted. We just do it. We do our laundry, we shop, we open mail, we brush our teeth, we make supper...and so on. But didn't the Word do just these same things for thirty years? What a colossal waste of precious time! So we might think.

Could this humble hiddenness be telling us something about what we take for granted? Could it be calling us to pay more attention to what we consider to be so...ordinary? What would happen to our little hidden lives if we did our ordinary little things with a knowing little smile on our faces, filling them with love and gratitude? What would happen to our mental health? To our attitudes... to our sense of the presence that is always with us, doing those humdrum ordinary things with us and feeling right at home? Give it some thought. Yes, truly, you are a hidden God, and we are your beloved hidden people.

**With me always, you said.**

**But I forget.**

**I have all this stuff to do, you know...**

**The rent to pay and getting the car serviced...**

**Doing the laundry and cleaning...and...and...**

**"Martha, Martha," you say, "**

**...you are troubled about so many things."**

**"only one thing is necessary."**

**"I am with you doing all the ordinary things...**

**...smile!"**



*Special thanks to Associate Mary Kay McVey for these reflections.*

**Sunday, January 3, 2021: The Feast of the Epiphany**  
**Is 60:1-6, Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6, Mt 2:1-12**

“See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears his glory.” On this feast of the Epiphany we celebrate because a light has been shown to us. The glory of God among us is our reason to rejoice. Although the world has been covered in darkness and the thick cloud of sickness and death has enveloped the earth in this pandemic, we can begin to see our way out of the dark night of despair. We rejoice with every nation and give thanks for those who have brought the gift of healing and comfort to us all. God, you have enlightened the minds and hearts of your people. Help us to forge a path that will lead to a renewed commitment to compassion, healing and justice in this coming year.

**Sunday, January 10, 2021: The Baptism of the Lord**  
**Is 42:1-4, 6-7, Acts 10:34-38, Mk 1:7-11**

“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” Sharing the holidays with my children has given me great pride and satisfaction. I marvel as I watch them becoming young adults. “You are my children; with you I am well pleased.” Yet, I still experience many moments of frustration and fear wishing I could shield them from life’s perils. One of the most difficult tasks of parenthood is allowing my children to become autonomous as they negotiate relationships and their place in the world; triumphs and mistakes included. The immense love of our Parent-God for Jesus in today’s gospel, tells us, we too, are treasured and loved as God’s children. In times of doubt and pain, our Parent has not abandoned us but watches with love and anticipation. God allows us room to grow into the beautiful people in whom God is well pleased.

**Sunday, January 17, 2021: Second Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19, 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20, Jn 1:35-42**

“Speak, for your servant is listening.” Like Samuel we can often miss opportunities to experience God’s presence in our lives. We may be, if you will, sleepwalking through life. Let us pray for God to open our ears recognizing the Divine voice and to answer the call. Sometimes, it is the wisdom and insight of others that can help us to understand how God is working in our lives. God’s presence comes in the form of our human connections and communications. May we faithfully serve God by serving others. May we experience the joy that is found in loving service to all in need of hope and healing.

**Sunday, January 24, 2021: Third Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**Jon 3:1-5, 10, 1 Cor 7:29-31, Mk 1:14-20**

“This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” As we move into the season of winter ordinary time, it is tempting to operate on autopilot. As winter drags on and our quarantining continues, we may not feel motivated to start new self-improvement projects let alone participate in building the kingdom of God. And yet, that is exactly what Jesus is calling us to do in the Gospel today. There really is no time like the present. Now is the time of fulfillment. Now is the day of salvation. Let us resolve to act without delay in any way we are able to make our world a better place and fulfill our destinies as daughters and sons of God.

**Sunday, January 31, 2021: Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**Dt 18:15-20, 1 Cor 7:32-35, Mk 1:21-28**

“I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin, and will put my words into his mouth.” Speaking the truth in love is a skill everyone benefits from but is often hard to practice. Prophetic words can be hard to hear and poorly received by those who need to hear them most. No one wants to be the bearer of bad news or course corrections. But in order to have healthy, authentic relationships we must sometimes assume the role of the prophet. If we are to fulfill our charism to be committed to truth and compelled to justice we are called to embrace our prophetic call, speaking the truth in love.