
Reflections for the
Season of Advent 2016



Edgewood College

Reflections available during Advent at:
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For centuries, the Church has set aside “Advent” time: the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day until Christmas Eve. Advent is derived from the Latin word for “arrival” or “coming.” As December days grow increasingly shorter and colder, Christians await in hope the Light of the World, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas.

For contemporary American culture, Advent’s reflective, hopeful mood is easily overshadowed by the holiday season’s relentless details and events. We hope you will find this book a source of peace and inspiration in the midst of the season’s activities. The book offers a daily reflection from contributors throughout the Edgewood College community. Their reflections are based on Advent Scripture readings in the Common Christian lectionary. Because of space constraints, generally only a verse or two of the selected Scripture reading is included.

We welcome your feedback; please email rrice@edgewood.edu. Thank you.

Blessings on your season,

*Dominican Life and Mission
Edgewood College*

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Sunday, November 27

Isaiah 2: 1-5. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

This scripture text talks about the serenity and supremacy of God over the individual interests of people.

We need to eradicate all our selfishness and personal desires, envy, hatred and climb this hill of burden to reach the highest mountain of God's house, which can be thought of as values such as truth, compassion, and love.

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.” This line tells us to convert our weapons into tools for agriculture. In the modern world, if we use our scientific research for building renewable energy sources and to grow more food, then all of humankind can benefit from it.

It is high time to be unified, inclusive and embrace diversity and walk to fulfill our shared vision of achieving our core mission values – truth, compassion, justice, partnership and community, to make this world a beautiful place.

Atreyee Sinha, Assistant Professor, Computing and Information Sciences Department

Monday, November 28

Isaiah 4: 2-6. When God...purges Jerusalem's blood from her midst with a blast of searing judgment, then will God create...a smoking cloud by day and a light of flaming fire by night. For over all, God's glory will be shelter and protection: shade from the parching heat of day, refuge and cover from storm and rain.

Foreboding and troubling images contrast with hopeful and inspiring images in this passage. Wrath-filled judgment awaits the unrepentant; mercy and comfort await the faithful. The passage implies a time of great turbulence, trouble, and uncertainty. Certainly, in this Advent season of 2016, we face our own challenges, ambiguities, and fears. What will 2017 bring? We can take solace in this passage that, if we trust in God's plan, we will weather the current storm because God will provide “shelter and protection” for the faithful. I am reminded of another passage that says, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication,

with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds.” (Philippians 4: 6-7) Many blessings!

*Daniel A. Schroeder
Faculty Member, School of Business*

Tuesday, November 29

Isaiah 11: 1-10. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

I believe that when someone has faith or, how this scripture described it, is “full of the knowledge of the Lord,” many things are possible. Having faith helps us think before we act on our instincts. Our instincts tell us to judge what we see as different and/or ‘not normal.’ However, in this scripture, the wolf is in harmony with the lamb and the leopard will lie with the kid. It makes me ponder, how different are we really? As Maya Angelou stated: “we are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike.” Furthermore, how can we mirror the lessons in the scripture and advocate for others?

When reading the phrase, “a little child shall lead them,” I think of my children (Aidan & Dylan) and how I have learned so much by letting them lead me on their journeys of childhood and correspondingly my journey of motherhood. The journey is messy, fantastic, wonderful, difficult and full of surprises...such as the journey in spirituality and in life. At the end of each day, I ask my children the following questions:

- What was the best part of your day?
- What was your ‘not so best’ part of the day?
- How did you show kindness today?

Children speak the truth and love unconditionally. What can we learn from children? What can we learn from the child within us?

Beth John, Edgewood College Ed.D., 2012

Wednesday, November 30

Romans 10: 9-18. The same God is God of all.

Immersed in social theory this semester, I am reminded of the work of Karl Mannheim, perhaps the first to be explicitly identified with the sociology of knowledge. Underscoring the power of community, Mannheim destroys our illusion of individualism, showing how our thinking is not really “ours.” We think (and I would add, feel) in ways available to us when we come into the world. The raw material for our thinking lies in what surrounds us. If it is curiosity and respect for the experience of others, we will bring those qualities. If relationships are developed through kindness, most of us will use that approach. Somewhat paradoxically then, it is our individual choices that make, and re-make, the community daily. I like to think the work we do here enlarges the community for many and by holding up multiple perspectives, makes the choices of openness, respect, and kindness more likely.

Sue Pastor, Associate Director, COR General Education Program

Thursday, December 1

Isaiah 26: 1-6. You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

We are living in a day of instability, depression, doubt, fear and worry. When life is going well it is easy to read God’s promises and agree wholeheartedly with the truth of God’s word. However, when our world turns upside down, disappointment replaces anticipation, and what we perceive to be a perfect world is no longer a reality, God’s Word becomes genuine to us. God promises to keep us in perfect peace if our minds are steadfast on God because our trust (belief, hope, faith) is in the truth of God’s word. What are some characteristics of Perfect peace? A person who is not controlled by the negative circumstances surrounding them. A person who guards their minds from the worries of this world. A person who has learned the importance of contentment as a result of their relationship with God. Perfect Peace!

Cynthia Perry, Associate Professor, School of Education

Friday, December 2

Isaiah 29: 17-24. Thus says our God: But a very little while, and Lebanon shall be changed into an orchard, and the orchard be regarded as a forest! On that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book; and out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see. The lowly will ever find joy in God, and the poor rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Your mission is to place yourself at the gates of hope;
not the prudent gates of optimism which are somewhat narrower;
not the stalwart, boring gates of common sense;
nor the strident gates of self-righteousness, which creak on shrill and
angry hinges;

people cannot hear us there; they cannot pass through;
nor the cheerful, flimsy garden gate of “everything is gonna be all
right.”

But a different, sometimes lonely place, the place of truth-telling,
about your own soul first of all and its condition,

the place of resistance and defiance,
the piece of ground from which you see the world both as it is
and as it could be, as it will be;

the place from which you glimpse not only struggle,
but joy in the struggle.

And you stand there, beckoning and calling,
telling people what you are seeing,
asking people what they see.

Victoria Safford, “Gates of Hope”

Saturday, December 3

Isaiah 30: 19-21, 23-26. God will be gracious to you when you cry out, as soon as God hears God will answer you.

God’s love and how that love is showered upon us stands out in these verses. Through God’s love for all, we are taught how to love everyone in the way God teaches us. God loved us so much that Jesus was sent to redeem us and to teach us to love everyone. Jesus taught us to “love one another as I have loved you.”

Jesus loves all and showers love, healing, respect, and compassion on all. We need to remember Jesus’s example in how we treat others

today. Pope Francis says “The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need!” We must love each and every person and show that love the way God loves each and every person. During this season of Advent, I encourage you to feel God’s love and to share it with everyone you encounter.

*Edward J. Keeley
Director, Institutional Assessment and Research
Senior Adjunct Faculty, School of Business*

Sunday, December 4

Romans 15: 4-9. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another.

During a fall when nasty rhetoric and demeaning comments seared our souls, this passage from Romans extends hope and spiritual insight for us. “May the God of *endurance* and *encouragement* (*patience* and *comfort* in another translation) grant you to think in harmony with one another....Welcome one another as Christ welcomed you...”

How do we think in harmony with each other? This calls to mind our values of community and partnership, values that we each commit ourselves to, and that we extend our best efforts to achieve. Thinking in harmony doesn't mean always being in agreement! Actually, the Dominican Studium of Edgewood College is the perfect place to think in harmony with each other, as we each search for truth, listen to each other thoughtfully, get to know each other, especially those with a different perspective, and disagree respectfully. How do we welcome the stranger, the other, to mutual dialogue, “as Christ welcomed you?”

As this first semester draws to a close, how has the “God of endurance and encouragement, the God of patience and comfort” accompanied you on your journey to discover deeper truth, to teach or learn your assigned subject? How have you welcomed God and others to accompany you on your journey?

During these next weeks of Advent, how can you carve out a contemplative space in yourself, to deepen your own celebration of the graces of Christmas, and to prepare for 2017?

Mary Ellen Gevelinger, O.P., Board of Trustees

Monday, December 5

Psalm 85: 9-14. I will hear what God proclaims; for God proclaims peace to people...Kindness and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall kiss.

What is the book of Psalms? Well you can think of it as a book of songs itself; it rarely condemns and mostly proclaims joy. That is what this Psalm proclaims, joy; this is joyous work of proclaiming glory. This passage can also be summed up by one verse, Proverbs 3:5, “Trust in God with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.”

Something I remember from going to my home church is song. We have a lot of soloists in both churches I go to. This last stanza reminds me of a time where I would hear this: “In the morning I will sing, I will sing glad songs to you, I will sing glad songs of praise to you.” I think in this world right now that’s what we also need.

*Vivian Washington, Senior, Communication Studies/
Media and Messaging*

Tuesday, December 6

Isaiah 40: 1-11. Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God.

A Prayer for Refugees

God of our Wandering Ancestors,
long have we known
that your heart is with the refugee:
that you were born into time
in a family of refugees
fleeing violence in their homeland,
who then gathered up their hungry child
and fled into alien country.

Their cry, your cry, resounds through the ages:
“Will you let me in?”

Give us hearts that break open
when our brothers and sisters turn to us
with that same cry.
Then surely all these things will follow:
ears will no longer turn deaf to their voices.
eyes will see a moment for grace instead of a threat.

Tongues will not be silenced but will instead advocate.
And hands will reach out –
working for peace in their homeland,
working for justice in the lands where they seek safe haven.

God, protect all refugees in their travels.
May they find a friend in me
and so make me worthy
of the refuge I have found in you. Amen.

Catholic Relief Services

Wednesday, December 7

Isaiah 40: 25-31. Though youth stagger and fall, they that hope in God will renew their strength; they will soar as with eagles' wings; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.

It is when things go wrong, when good things do not happen, when our prayers seem to have been lost, that God is most present. We do not need the sheltering wings when things go smoothly. We are closest to God in the darkness, stumbling along blindly.

*Madeleine L'Engle, The Fire of Peace: A Prayer Book,
Pax Christi, 1992*

Thursday, December 8

Luke 1: 26-38. Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

This statement seems to be incomprehensible considering Mary has just been told she is miraculously bearing a child that would be considered the Son of the Most High. It seems almost ridiculous to suggest that she have no fear. But Mary is about to set out on a remarkable journey, and the angel Gabriel, a messenger of God's good news, does not say this to be disconcerting. Rather, this passage serves as a reminder that though fear may be present in unknowable circumstances, it is always accompanied by the power and presence of God. Mary was not the only one with the responsibility to carry out God's will; we have this responsibility every day. Our responsibility is to take the good news we receive and act upon it without fear, knowing we are doing right when we are listening to God's word.

Katie Rickert, Junior, Spanish Teaching

Friday, December 9

Isaiah 48: 17-19. I, your God, teach you what is for your good, and lead you on the way you should go.

Traveling alone is a daily experience for many people. Even in the moving crowds of buses and subways, many a commuter travels alone, absorbed in private thoughts and dreams. We are called to move through life together as brothers and sisters toward the city of God. Every person you meet this day is heading somewhere, near or far. Many will be traveling alone, but we are all moving toward God. God's dwelling place is reached by doing what we can to share the journey with others, be it through prayer or kindness to the weary.

*Fr. James Stephen Behrens, OCSO, Living with Christ,
Bayard, December 2016*

Saturday, December 10

Psalm 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19. Take care of this vine, and protect what your right hand has planted, the one whom you yourself made strong.

As I consider this passage, my thoughts are drawn to the line "Take care of this vine, and protect what your right hand has planted, the one whom you yourself made strong."

In what seems an increasingly disposable world, I feel that we are all too quick to rush to the new, and trash anything old or not in perfect working order. This applies equally to our view of humanity. Too often we abandon people we see as flawed, not worthy of help or receiving a second chance. In doing so we fail to see the Divine in all of us, neglect our duty to care for each other and ourselves.

*Nathan Dowd, Assistant Director Public Instructional Services,
Oscar Rennebohm Library; Edgewood College Ed.D., 2013*

Sunday, December 11

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10. Be strong, fear not!

This scripture is about faith. It is about putting your trust in God that if and when you fully give yourself to God, God will take care of you. In a time where so many are closed off to asking for or accepting help from

others in fear of being taken advantage of, we need to remember that not every day has to be a battle. Life can be so much less stressful if people would stop putting so much pressure on themselves and others and accept that someone else can do the same task. It's about putting your faith in God, that God will guide you on the path to peace in yourself and the world as long as you give God the chance. As a result, you will contribute to and be a part of a happier, joyous and thankful place.

Paityn Albers, Mail Center Assistant; Edgewood College B.A., 2015

Monday, December 12

Zechariah 2: 14-17. Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! See, I am coming to dwell among you, says God. Many nations shall join themselves to God on that day, and they shall be God's people, and God will dwell among you.

Zechariah was a prophet who after the fall of Jerusalem encouraged Jewish exiles who returned to the city to rebuild their temple and renew their covenant with God. As was the case in Zechariah's time, we are living in an age when great cities in the Mideast have fallen, temples have been destroyed and people have forsaken sacred agreements. Zechariah in this Scriptural text predicts that one day "many nations shall join themselves together." He tells people in passages other than this one to remember forgotten covenantal stipulations especially those pertaining to social justice, mercy and compassion. Reflecting on these prophecies and directives it is with great hope that nations will come together to rebuild devastated cities and exiled individuals and others will work together in the spirit of justice, mercy and compassion to reconstruct broken lives. Hope truly does spring eternal especially if it can one day be realized.

Annette Hemmings, Professor, School of Education

Tuesday, December 13

Zephaniah 3: 1-2, 9-13. For then I will change and purify the lips of the peoples, that they all may call upon the name of God, to serve God with one accord.

Hidden God,
wherever you are
in your own kind of space,
we watch and wait for you

to startle us to wakeful newness
in this Advent season.
Come and thrust into us
the spirit of daring and courage
to make flesh on earth
a bit of the kingdom of heaven.
Come to open the inns
of our minds and hearts
to the miracles of your compassion
and purpose as Jesus demonstrated them.
Come and make your own transforming way
in the desert of our confusion
and wilderness of me and mine,
so we may walk with Jesus the hard way
of justice, mercy, and peace among the people of earth.
Come and lift up the valleys
of our discouragement and doubt and denial
and make level the mountains of our greed and pride
so we may see your glory revealed once more
in us and in all our brothers and sisters,
from the shepherd least to the magi lofty.

Ted Loder, My Heart in My Mouth, Augsburg Fortress Press, 2004

Wednesday, December 14

Isaiah 45: 6b-8, 18, 21c-25. Let justice descend, O heavens, like dew from above, like gentle rain let the skies drop it down.

I always carry with me the collective principles of my parents, Charlie and Susie Denning. They raised my siblings and me to be reflective, giving, and caring. They conveyed to us that being charitable to others is being charitable to ourselves, and they helped us understand that we are not an island unto ourselves.

Essentially, we are connected to each other just like the lyrics in the *Dry Bones* song that we learned from grade school. This spiritual, which emanates from Ezekiel 37: 1-14, expresses how the “shoulder bone is connected to the neck bone and the neck bone is connected to the head bone. Now hear the word of the Lord.”

Isaiah 45: 6b-8 and the *Dry Bones* song is the harvest from my parents' wisdom that life and light come from one source. We are all connected; and, thus, we must look out for one another so that we can reap the harvest of benevolence. Helping each other—"like gentle rain let the skies drop it down"—is humanity in full view.

*Marihelen Denning Stoltz, Faculty, Communication Studies;
Edgewood College M.A., 1998*

Thursday, December 15

Isaiah 54: 1-10. For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great tenderness I will take you back.

"For a brief moment I abandoned you..." We all endure periods of great despair, loneliness and grief. During times like these we may feel abandoned by God. Our bodies tire and our spirit weakens. Our faith waivers as we wonder: Why am I to suffer, if I believe in You? We fear our pain will last forever. We fear the terror will never end. Tender are our hearts. But our faith reminds us, and helps us understand that God has not abandoned or forgotten us. With faith we understand the throb of our wounded hearts will eventually recede to a quiet, tolerable rhythm. Our redeemed hearts will only occasionally skip a beat with unpleasant yet tolerable memories. This is cause for hope. We can survive if we can realize a future filled with God's love. "With great tenderness I will take you back." Our relief from pain then, will surely come.

Mary Sambrook, Campus Assistance Center Supervisor

Friday, December 16

Isaiah 56: 1-3a, 6-8. Observe what is right, do what is just.

Simply put, this scripture invites us and urges us to love one another, challenging us as a collective, loving community to fulfill the moral and ethical duties we have towards one another. To be honest with one another. To act with compassion and justice behind all our decisions. To speak up for those whose voices are not heard.

We live in a time where injustice is very much alive. Oftentimes prejudice and bias put those who are different or marginalized in unfavorable situations. This scripture suggests blessed will be the man or woman that keeps their arms open not only to their God, but to their neighbor. Those who can channel their faith and spirituality for righteousness, are walking on the correct path towards spiritual blissfulness.

Gabe Velazquez, Sophomore, Medical Sciences/Sonography

Saturday, December 17

Psalm 72: 1-4b, 7-8, 17. Justice shall flower in his days, and profound peace, till the moon be no more. May he rule from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Even as our worlds and our earth change, the pursuit of peace and justice will be a constant. We can trust that the poor and afflicted will be defended and protected. We can find solace in nature – in the mountains, the sea, the hills, and the sun. And we will all experience God’s blessings as many nations, but one earth.

Especially at this time of year, I hope that we can all contribute to being stewards of God’s blessings and agents of profound peace.

Christine Benedict, Vice President for Enrollment Management

Sunday, December 18

Matthew 1: 18-24. The angel of God appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.”

What so inspires me in this reading is the fearlessness that Joseph showed in accepting Mary as his wife. Here he was, a simple, faithful man of God asked to break away from his traditional belief to trust his dreams, a visitation from an angel, and the relationship he had with Mary. We know in our work as nurses with pregnant families that a loving and supportive intimate relationship is important for a mother-to-be to have a healthy pregnancy and birth. So lovely to see this reflected in this scripture!

*Mary Elizabeth Bathum
Associate Professor, Henry Predolin School of Nursing*

Monday, December 19

Luke 1: 5-25. Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son.

In the ancient world, children were a necessity. They carried on the family name, and in an age without any social security nets, they provided for the well-being of elderly parents. Children were a sign of God's blessing. Childlessness, barrenness, was often seen as a sign of divine punishment.

Though we know Zechariah and Elizabeth are righteous, it takes little to imagine the kind of talk that might have been occurring around their local well, where families gathered their water and surely shared town gossip. When Zechariah was struck dumb at the annunciation of John's birth, what were they to make of that? When Elizabeth's unexpected, grace-filled pregnancy occurred, the gossip would have surely escalated.

Into the orderly presentation of events at the start of Luke's Gospel, if we let ourselves imagine the scenes, we find sheer chaos. The Spirit is at work, and while the results will unfold deliberately in the pages to come, the real work of God might just be found in the unexpected and unpredictable.

*Cackie Upchurch, Give Us This Day
Liturgical Press, December 2016*

Tuesday, December 20

Isaiah 7: 10-14. Therefore God will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.

What stands out from this passage is the line "Therefore God will give you this sign." Isaiah addresses the lack of faith the Jewish people had in God. The prophet was sent by God to King Ahaz. Ahaz was given the opportunity to pronounce his faith, but he denied that commitment. Isaiah responded by announcing that God would send a sign –"the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel." It is important to note here that Emmanuel means "God with us." Through the birth of Emmanuel, God is making a promise to the Jewish people that God will be with them, despite their lack of faith. Overall, the passage tells us that not only is God true to God's word but that we

can count on God's faithfulness to us, even when we lack in faithfulness to God.

Megan Armstrong, Area Director, Residence Life

Wednesday, December 21

Luke 1: 39-45. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

In this passage, Elizabeth experiences extreme joy at the arrival of her cousin Mary, who is now the mother of the Son of God. The word "joy" is often associated with this time of year, but it is truly relevant in this passage. The wonder of Mary's role is so great, that even the child that Elizabeth is carrying, John the Baptist, feels that sheer joy and anticipation of the coming of Jesus and leaps within Elizabeth. To me, this was always such an exciting reading to hear, as it means that Christmas is almost upon us. During these last few days of Advent, we should be preparing even more for the coming of Jesus into our lives by filling ourselves, our hearts, and the hearts of others with joy as we look forward to the fulfillment of God's promise to us to send a Savior!

Kami Doberstein, Junior, Biology

Thursday, December 22

Luke 1: 46-56. God has mercy on all who fear God in every generation.

Mary of Nazareth was rooted in the faith and struggles of her people, subject to the cruelties of the world, and heir to the ancient hope for deliverance and salvation. In this light, Mary is honored not so much for her special nature as for her exceptional faith. In the darkness of faith, she offered her consent to the mysterious plan of God. In the light of grace she responded with her extraordinary song of praise and thanksgiving.

Robert Ellsberg, Blessed Among All Women, Crossroad, 2007

Friday, December 23

Malachi 3: 1-4, 23-24. For he is like the refiner's fire, or like the fuller's lye.

The text here describes God as one who will “sit refining.” In ancient times a craftsperson would sit next to a hot fire with molten gold in a crucible, stirring and skimming the impurities that rose to the top. With temperatures more than 1000 degrees, this was clearly a dangerous job and one that took a great deal of skill and patience to master. Those who were “refiners” were able to “clean” without destroying what was good. The end result was precious gold or silver.

These past few years we've seen the impurities in our human community rising to the top: hatred, fear, racism, misogyny, greed, alienation all floating around at the top of the crucible. At times our world seems so dirty we might wonder—is there anything left worth “refining”?

Malachi assures us that reconciliation with our alienated brothers and sisters will happen. God will not give up on us or let us give up on each other.

I for one am grateful that God is a purifier and not a destroyer.

Vicki Clark, Bookstore and Mail Center Manager

Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24

Isaiah 9: 1-6. For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests.

Isaiah wrote this prophecy about 700 years before the birth of Jesus. Written in a time of despair, poverty, and constant warfare, the passage communicates an astonishing message of hope in a promise made by God. “A child is born to us, a son is given us.” This gift of grace is the ultimate present. We didn't earn it, we don't deserve it, and yet it is ours. Isaiah's words of hope have meaning for us today. God's promise is clear – the Messiah's return will bring great light, abundant joy, great rejoicing, the end of war and oppression, and an everlasting peace. Be ever hopeful, remember God's promise and gift each and every day.

Tom Bartelt, Marketing Manager, Admissions Office

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25

Luke 2: 1-20. Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of God shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”

How can anyone reading these verses not hear Linus recite them in “A Charlie Brown Christmas?”

Every year we’re overwhelmed with holiday preparations: getting gifts, baking, concerts, travel, the tree, decorating our homes – only to have a last-minute change upset all our plans!

And then you hear Linus’s voice... “And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said, ‘Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.’ ”

God breaks into the world in unexpected ways: a baby in a manger, Linus on TV. And for a moment you’re embarrassed for paying so much attention to all the season’s “doings” and not enough to the good news and great joy that still break through: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom God’s favor rests.”

This season, let’s take time to pause. Listen. And hear it ourselves. Because “that’s what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown.”

Cristie Jacobs, Executive Assistant to the President

Thank you for sharing this Advent Journey with us —
to all who contributed reflections, and to you who
have taken the time to pause, read, reflect, and pray
during this Season.

*Dominican Life and Mission
Edgewood College*

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