

*Reflections*  
— for the —  
**SEASON of**  
**A D V E N T**

**EDGEWOOD COLLEGE**  
— 2021 —



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*Catholic tradition* sets aside “Advent” time, beginning the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day and concluding Christmas Eve.

Advent, derived from Latin, means “arrival” or “coming.” Through December’s ever shorter and colder days, Christians await in hope the Light of the World, the One whose birth we celebrate at Christmas.

In this, my first few days as one of the newest members of our community, I've felt a warm welcome to the Dominican Family. As we begin a new Advent Season, I invite you to enter into the 'season of waiting' with a compilation that includes a number of past reflections from our extended family.

This collection offers a daily reflection from contributors throughout the Edgewood College community, including some whose spirit lives on at this place we love so well.

I am honored to be a part of this wonderful Edgewood College tradition that marks this Community of Learners as a place of truth-seeking, rooted deeply in our shared pursuit for justice and peace.

The reflections are based on Advent scripture readings in the Common Christian Lectionary. Because of space constraints, only a brief portion of the selected Scripture is included. In this book you will find a source of hope and inspiration throughout the season.

*Milton J. Bravo, Ph.D.*

*Vice President for Mission, Values, and Inclusion*

## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 \_\_\_\_\_

**Jeremiah 33:14-16.** *The days are coming, says our God, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah. In those days, in that time, I will raise up for David a just shoot; he shall do what is right and just in the land. In those days Judah shall be safe and Jerusalem shall dwell secure...*

the human heart and conscience hardwired  
to seek happiness and be safe  
to attain the good and be inclusive  
to obtain justice and be fair  
to promote freedom and be responsible  
to become divine  
to dwell in heaven on earth  
god's promise  
our struggle

*In memoriam - Denis Collins, Former Professor, School of Business*

## MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29 \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 2: 1-5.** *They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again.*

This part of the scripture caught my attention: “They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again.” I interpret it as things can be used in different ways and we make a decision on how to use them. For example, we all have character traits that could be used to make the world better or to create conflict. I see that this is relevant today because there are many instances where groups of people do not get along. We should not use our strengths and skills for things that will bring us apart but we should use them to bring peace to our world. Let us take some time to reflect on how we are using the special gifts that each of us has to enrich the lives of others.

*Marisol Lopez*

*Associate Professor, Biological Sciences*

## TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30 \_\_\_\_\_

**Romans 10: 9-18.** *How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news...Their voice has gone forth to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.*

Today we have just over 10 hours of daylight. We are at the beginning of our journey to rekindle our spirit, renew our faith, revive our sense of wonder. The days will get darker as we approach Christmas, but we know...we believe... that brighter days are coming. Just as Paul reminds the early Church of Rome, we remind ourselves during the season of Advent to believe with our heart. As we prepare for the holiday—decorating our homes, finding the right gifts, stocking up for gatherings and feasts—may we remember that the most important thing for us to prepare is our heart.

*Andrew Manion*

*President, Edgewood College*

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1 ---

**Isaiah 25: 6-10.** *On this mountain the God of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines, juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.*

‘The God of hosts will provide for all peoples’, in my opinion, represents the idea that we are never really alone. Whether you believe in God, Buddha, Allah, or another spiritual belief, people can provide encouragement during a time of uncertainty, a stranger wishing someone a good day, or someone buying lunch for a friend financially struggling. Love is everywhere, even in moments of confusion and tragedy. No matter your spirituality, having faith that someone ‘will wipe away the tears’ IS an honest statement. In college, it may be inspiration of spirituality or belief in humankind that allows someone to sit next to a friend struggling with loss, a professor providing encouraging words for a student making a crucial life choice, and so many other situations. In the dark times and good times people can provide each other incredible love and mercy.

*Carley Hilt, '19*

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2 ---

**Isaiah 26: 1-6.** *A strong city have we; God sets up walls and ramparts to protect us. Open the gates...*

The lines, “A strong city have we; God sets up walls and ramparts to protect us. Open the gates...” I appreciate the two images of ramparts protecting and gates opening. I look all around me and see walls that divide; walls we, as fallible humans, build to protect us from what we fear. We take it upon ourselves to judge who can come within our walls and who should stay out... who is worthy and who is not. Yet, do any of us truly have the deep wisdom to do this? Or, as this passage suggests, can we foster trust that the Universe will protect and provide? Can we understand that protection doesn’t mean preventing pain, sadness and fear but rather being with us as we navigate the joy and sorrow that is a life lived well? Can we develop the faith and courage to open the gates to our hearts, minds, and community? Can we strive to serve and love one another with firm purpose and in peace?

*In memoriam - Amy Gannon, Former Interim Dean, School of Business*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3

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**Isaiah 29:17–24.** *Thus says the Lord God... The deaf shall hear the words of a book; and out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see... Those who err in spirit shall acquire understanding, and those who find fault shall receive instruction.*

I am reminded of Chris Van Allsburg’s wonderful book, *The Polar Express*, in which a young boy takes a magical Christmas Eve trip on The Polar Express train, bound for the North Pole. There, the boy is chosen to receive the first gift of Christmas – one silver bell from Santa’s sleigh.

During the train ride home, the boy is heartbroken to discover he has lost the bell. On Christmas morning, his younger sister Sarah finds a box for him under the Christmas tree, containing the lost bell. When he shook it, his parents could not hear its sweet silvery tone, although the boy and sister could hear it. The boy, now an adult, ends his story: “At one time most of my friends could hear the bell, but as the years passed, it fell silent for all of them. Even Sarah found one Christmas that she couldn’t hear its sweet sound. Though I’ve grown old, the bell still rings for me, as for all who truly believe.” Believe – and the power of grace will sound, like the silver bell, in our hearts and spirits – transforming our experience of the world in ways we can only imagine.

*Becky Rice, Former Staff*

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4

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**Isaiah 30:19-26.** *The Lord will give you the bread you need and the water for which you thirst. No longer will your teacher hide, but with your own eyes you shall see your Teacher...*

The word Advent derives from Medieval Latin, *adventus*, meaning arrival. In this season of anticipation, Isaiah’s words remind us that God provides everything we need – not want – to live. In any uncertain time, this message of hope strengthens us to continue onward. To believers, Isaiah said “with your own eyes you shall see your Teacher,” who will guide you on your way. In Matthew Chapter 9, Jesus enjoins his apostles to go out and preach, to show the way. In founding the Order of Preachers, St. Dominic continued this work. As educators we teach, but we also learn. In the liberal arts tradition, we seek to open our minds and free ourselves from prejudice and misconception. With compassion, we teach and learn from each other. Namaste, the traditional South Asian greeting, means in Sanskrit, ‘The divine in me bows to the divine

in you.' When we look beyond ourselves for guidance and strength, for the things we need to do our work, we would do well to open our eyes to the divine manifested in each member of our community. We have much to learn from each other.

*Tom Brandner, Former Faculty*

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 \_\_\_\_\_

**Baruch 5:1-9.** *Jerusalem, take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on the splendor of glory from God forever...*

God is speaking to us directly. No – God is shouting at us. More pointedly, God is staring us in the eye and shaking us by the shoulders! When we read the opening words of this passage, “Jerusalem, take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on the splendor of glory from God forever,” we are reminded to be joyful and pay attention to our abundant blessings!

Every day I marvel at the awesome sunrise and stand in wonder at the gorgeous sunset, just two of the splendid joys and glorious gifts from God that should cause rejoicing, yet we often fail to notice.

There's a meaningful quote that applies: “The pessimist sees the glass half empty. The optimist sees the glass half full. And the philanthropist sees a glass of water and looks for someone who might be thirsty.” We must share God's splendor with others generously.

*Dianne Ballweg, '75, M.A. '07, Former Trustee*

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 6 \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 35:1-10.** *The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Most High, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, fear not!'...*

The word wilderness made me remember something in my advanced biology class about the cactus plant. The cactus comes from the family Cactaceae, which is a succulent, spiny, usually leafless plant. Isn't it



amazing how the cactus plant grows in some of the most arid regions and yet has some of the best and often showy flowers. Don't you ever wonder how they survive these conditions? When I think of how they survive or how the animals survive, and how the human body was constructed, I laugh to myself and say "God you really knew what you were doing when you created this world." God really makes the desert rejoice and blossom like a rose. Wow! God you are too wonderful.

*Ella Ward, '17*

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7 \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11.** *A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God...every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain...*

Having traveled on the nation's highways and byways recently, it comes to mind that God's love can be compared to the interstate highway system: the steep hills and dangerous curves have been smoothed out for us. It makes our journey easier to travel. A kind word or gesture can do the same, especially when unexpected. Advent: a time to ready ourselves for God. Here is where we smooth out the rough edges of our own lives. Prepare your heart to accept those who may be different from you. Find the rough areas around you and look for ways to make lives safer, healthier, happier and more stable. When we take care of our neighbors, we take care of ourselves and our own souls. I believe this is how God accomplishes holding us in God's arms and keeping us in God's care.

*Mary Hoffman, '90, Staff Accountant, Business Office*

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8 \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 1:26-38.** *And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God."*

The verb that caught my eye in the description the angel gives of what will take place for Mary was the action of "overshadow." What is this action of the Holy Spirit in the life of Mary and in our lives? An overshadowing of our inability to understand our full potential? An overshadowing of our fears? As the year begins to wrap up, I have felt that I am being too hard on myself for the things that I should have done or could have done. It seems that I have

focused too much of my energy on the past. This passage is reminding me to take a moment and give myself grace in these difficult times. The Spirit is present in our lives – reminding us of the grace that is always available for us. The Spirit is always guiding and protecting us in our journey, especially when we cannot see our potential or cannot see past our fears.

*Jordan Smith, '20, Coordinator for Student Engagement and Leadership,  
Office of Student Inclusion and Involvement*

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9 \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 41: 13-20.** *I am your God, who grasp your right hand; It is I who say to you, “Fear not, I will help you.”*

Fear Not, do not be afraid. This message appears over and over throughout holy scriptures. Fear not, for the great I AM is with you and me, working with us to make the mountains of our fears and grief into molehills that become chaff in the wind. Thus, allowing and imploring you and me to get up, go and do Holy work. We are, as it is said in the Talmud, called to “Not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You and I are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are we free to abandon it.” May we choose to be still and know; may we see Holy Love in ourselves and one another; and may Thy will be done.

*Joan Lampert, Adjunct Instructor, School of Education*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 48: 17-19.** *Thus says God, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I, your God, teach you what is for your good, and lead you on the way you should go. If you would hearken to my commandments, your prosperity would be like a river...Your descendants would be like the sand, and those born of your stock like its grains...*

In this section of Isaiah, the prophet is speaking to people who have returned to Israel from captivity in Babylon and are beginning a new life. Through Isaiah, God tells the people that God will teach them what is for their good and will lead them on the way they should go. God promises that if they hearken to God’s commands they will be prosperous, and their offspring as numerous as sands at the seashore—the same promise God made to their ancestors, Abraham and Sarah.

Some evangelists assert that faith in Christ, listening to God’s commands,

will bring financial success. They advocate what some have called the prosperity gospel. But God's ways are mysterious. In faith we believe that ultimately a just and merciful God will reward the good, and evil will have its comeuppance. But by experience we know that is not always the case. Good actions do not always bring good results. Bad things happen to good people. Scripture says the rain falls on the good and the bad alike. Holy people get cancer and white collar crime goes unpunished. Oftentimes people suffer not because they are bad people but because they have acted foolishly. Trusting that good is rewarded and evil punished is a good way to raise a child but is shaky motivation for thoughtful adults intent on living a moral life.

*In memoriam - Fr. Tony Schumacher, Former College Chaplain*

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalm 80:2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19.** *Once again, O God, look down from heaven, and see; take care of this vine, and protect what your right hand has planted...*

This passage brings to mind the image of a farmer or even a gardener tending a plant that has been very deliberately and carefully planted. The Psalmist sees the one who cultivates as being called upon by the plant itself to remain present, active, and protective. Vulnerable to the elements, the vine's very survival is dependent upon the constant watch and care of the gardener. The Psalmist recognizes that for humans to become their full potential, the One who planted them must be continually involved with them, showing constant attention in order to bring them to full flower. We enter this holy season at the beginning of winter, a time not normally thought of as one of tending and growth. However, the stories of Divinity engaging with humanity remind us that our Gardener is intimately involved with us, the growing vines.

*Kevin File, Night Supervisor, Campus Assistance Center*

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 \_\_\_\_\_

**Zephaniah 3:14-18a.** *Shout for joy, daughter Zion! Sing joyfully, Israel! Be glad and exult with all your heart, daughter Jerusalem!*

In today's reading, we are encouraged to rejoice, sing and exult with all our heart for the wondrous works of our God. In that same spirit, Catholics worldwide sing and rejoice during the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas. Many communities throughout the United States will come together for this special feast day, with Mariachis, instruments,

dancing, roses and moments of fellowship. La Guadalupana holds a special place in our Christian community, as she is seen side-by-side with us “en la lucha” (in the struggle) with all who experience injustices and marginalization. Her words to San Juan Diego bring all of us hope: “Let not your heart be disturbed... Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection?” May we remain under Her protection at all times, but especially during this Advent season as we await the coming of her Son.

*Milton J. Bravo, Ph.D., Vice President for Mission, Values, and Inclusion*

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 13 \_\_\_\_\_

**Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a.** *How pleasant are your tents, Jacob; your encampments, Israel! Like palm trees spread out, like gardens beside a river, like aloes God planted, like cedars beside water; water will drip from their buckets, their seed will have plentiful water...*

When the Israelites arrived in Moab, it caused panic among the Moabites; they were intimidated by the sheer numbers, and the reputation, of the Israelites. The Moabites engaged Balaam to curse the Israelites, but following God’s guidance, Balaam instead spoke God’s blessing. Who are you tempted to curse in your life? Does the driver who suddenly cuts you off cause you panic? Do you find yourself prejudging a colleague or classmate’s intention based on rumor or reputation? What territories do we guard, putting up our defenses when someone or something unknown draws near? Perhaps in this Advent season we can strive to be like Balaam, and turn our curses to blessings. Instead of honking the horn, send a prayer for the driver: “May you be at peace. May you be happy. May you know great love.” And may this help prepare our hearts for the coming of the One who continually prays with love for us.

*Julie Luecke, Associate Dean and Associate Professor, School of Education*

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14 \_\_\_\_\_

**Zephaniah 3: 1-2, 9-13.** *Thus says our God: Woe to the city, rebellious and polluted, to the tyrannical city! She hears no voice, accepts no correction...*

My first thought on reading these words from Zephaniah was that they’ll never be found embroidered on a throw pillow. This isn’t the Comforting God, more like the Terrifying God. The passage promises “woe to the city” which has not trusted in God. And later (Zephaniah 3:8) that woe is

described in graphic detail:

I have decided to assemble the nations,  
to gather the kingdoms  
and to pour out my wrath on them—  
all my fierce anger.

The whole world will be consumed  
by the fire of my jealous anger.

These days it is a bit unfashionable (at least in the circles I encounter) to think of a jealous angry God punishing communities for their manifold sins in person. However the passage reminds us that actions (and inaction) have consequences and those consequences can be dire. We don't need an angry God punishing us for our sins—we seem perfectly capable of delivering the punishment ourselves. In Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and the migrant road to Europe we see turmoil and suffering on a biblical scale, almost all of it due to a long history of human communities behaving badly. “Woe to the city” indeed.

*Steven Post, Former Professor*

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15\_\_\_\_\_

**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 Stoltz, M.A. '98, Senior Adjunct Instructor, Communication Studies*

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16 \_\_\_\_\_

**Isaiah 54: 1-10.** *Enlarge the space for your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly; lengthen your ropes and make firm your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left..*

Stretch out your hangings, lengthen your ropes, then, make your pegs firm: for you will burst out, burst out, burst to the right and the left. You will burst out, burst out, burst out.

God, widen our minds. Stretch in all our ideas. Broaden our vision that we may value those who are different among us.

God, widen our hearts. Stretch us in all that we feel. Increase our compassion that we may welcome even the stranger among us.

God, widen our souls. Stretch us in what we believe. Deepen our wonder of what is holy: things yet unknown and unheard of.

*“Widen Your Spaces,” song lyrics Isaiah 54: 2-3 / James V. Marchionda, O.P.*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17 \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalms 72:1-4, 7-8, 17.** *O God, with your judgment endow the king, and with your justice, the king's son; He shall govern your people with justice and your afflicted ones with judgment...Justice shall flower in his days, and profound peace, till the moon be no more.*

The psalmist calls out for a king who will bring profound peace and flowering justice to a world where all the tribes will be blessed. That kind of world seems so different from what we see, and it's easy to get discouraged. Yet despite great obstacles, the deep desire for peace and justice proclaimed in the ancient psalm is still alive today in art, music, religion, civic action and individual acts of courage and kindness. Where does this desire come from? In one of his Narnia stories, C.S. Lewis's character Aslan the Lion said: "You would not have called to me unless I had been calling to you." In this Advent season may the great calling out for peace and justice that echoes across time give us hope as we recognize that we are calling back to the one who first called to us.

*Mike Lake, Financial Analyst, Business Office*

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18 \_\_\_\_\_

**Jeremiah 23:5-8.** *Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up a righteous shoot to David; As king he shall reign and govern wisely, he shall do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, Israel shall dwell in security.*

In this text we see the promise that God will provide the Chosen with protection, wisdom, and prosperity. We see, as well, that this promise of protection is revealed while the Chosen are miserable, dispirited, frightened, and, in a way, lost.

Does the prospect of better things really sink into our bones and warm us as we endure hardship and disorientation? It may, if we have faith that, despite our brokenness, despite the hardships that befall us, the ways we feel misunderstood and unloved – and possibly undeserving of love – that God does, in fact, love us. God will give us protection.

However lost we are, God's grace will bring us home. However alone we feel, God is with us.

*Angela Salas, Ph.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs / Academic Dean*

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19 \_\_\_\_\_

**Micah 5: 1-4a.** *He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of God... his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace.*

Hope. This is what I am filled with as I read this passage. Hope for our future, hope for our community, hope for our world, just as God was sharing the good news and hope of the peace that would come with the birth of Jesus. Advent is one of my favorite times of the year, as we are reminded to pause, reflect, and.....have hope for the joy to come.

*Heather Harbach, Ed.D. '17, Vice President for Student Development / Dean of Students*

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 20

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

In this reading from Isaiah, God calls on Ahaz to ask for a sign, but Ahaz does not want to tempt God and dismisses God's request. Sometimes it is hard to have faith and trust in God, and easier to question God's plan. However, just as God gave Ahaz a sign, even though he pushed God away; so, shall we open our hearts to what God's next sign may be, even if we don't want to.

This Advent, let us be more consciously aware of the next sign God gives us. And in the meantime, remember Emmanuel, meaning God-with-us, is present in our lives.

*Elyssa Pope, Sophomore, Health Sciences*

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21

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**Zephaniah 3: 14-18a.** *God is in your midst, you have no further misfortune to fear. Fear not, O Zion, be not discouraged! Your God is in your midst, a mighty savior; who will rejoice over you with gladness, renew you in love, and sing joyfully because of you.*

In reading this passage, what resonated for me were two themes. The first was that good will (eventually) overcome evil, and the second was that our Higher Power truly does delight in each of us. 2020 has been anything but uplifting. We are living through unprecedented times. I've heard many a friend question "Why us?" or "Why now?" Many of us have had moments of deep introspection, and I'm sure many of us have wrestled with these very same questions, I know I have. As an LGBTQ+ person, I've often become exhausted and frustrated as my community's human rights are challenged daily by certain sub-sets of our society. This passage has reminded me that my inherent worth and dignity will always be intact and that my Higher Power does rejoice in me simply because "I am."

*J. Benink, Program Coordinator  
Science Outreach and Academic Support, School of Arts and Sciences*



## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22 \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 1:46-56.** *Mary said: "My soul proclaims Your greatness, O God; my spirit rejoices in You, my savior. For you have looked upon your lowly servant..."*

Bless us,  
nurture the holy seed  
growing within us,  
that we might come to believe  
the unlikely story  
the angels told to Mary:  
the life of God is about to be born --  
in us.

Our souls magnify you;  
our songs glorify you;  
our prayer is a holy longing;  
our life is a "yes"  
to your invitation  
to mother-forth your sacred future.

*Bruce Sanguin, If Darwin Prayed, Evans and Sanguin, 2010, p. 5*

## THURSDAY, 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 craftsman 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, Campus Store and Mail Center Manager*

## CHRISTMAS EVE, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24\_\_\_\_\_

**Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16.** *Your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever.*

What does this Scripture text mean in the everyday life of a 20-something year old in the midst of striving for a degree? Maybe it means that moment when you are drowning in papers and running low on hope for graduating on time, and yet you attend one service and some quality time with your parents and cry tears of joy as you realize all the blessings you have been provided.

Maybe it means that moment when you realize you're the poorest of poor college students but you're desperate to attend your favorite band's concert and miraculously you win some radio competition and now not only do you have tickets but also meet and greet passes. Maybe it's the moments of pure desperation when you realize all the coincidental miracles that pull you through, that make you more thankful and more hopeful. Maybe, just maybe those moments are God shining through. Maybe it isn't pure coincidence and rather God providing the hope and happiness you need to survive that week of overflowing assignments. Maybe it's realizing that as long as we put our hope and trust into God, God will shepherd and guide us to a full, abundant life. The relevance of this topic in a 20-something year old's life lies in the fact that, day to day, God provides, keeps our thrones, or lives, firm and fulfilled forever.

*Sadie Cordova, '19*

## CHRISTMAS DAY, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25\_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 2:15-20.** *When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”*

Today as we once again Celebrate Jesus, the Christ, born of Mary, Mother of God, we pray for the Courage to be faithful citizens of our World!

Each day the rhythms, melodies and harmonies of the heavenly Choirs call each of us multicultural, multilingual, multiracial humans to listen for our own personal call to Wholeness and Holiness...and to find those also hearing a similar tune. Then, each day let us Sing and Move with Others toward God’s sustainable, equitable, peaceful Planet.

Today’s Sacred Songs and Writings from Luke, Paul, Isaiah and other pre-Christian Communities lead the Way. Like Mary, let us each listen to our own individual, precious, pliable, reliable beating Heart as together, we move and bring Life into 2022 together.

*Sarah Naughton, O.P., Retired Library Archivist, Former Trustee*

***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. We wish you God’s holy gifts of joy, hope and peace in this sacred season.

*Mission, Values, and Inclusion*  
*Edgewood College*

*Layout: Jamie Maglior*  
*Design: Rae Senarighi*

We welcome your feedback.  
Please email **[milbravo@edgewood.edu](mailto:milbravo@edgewood.edu)**

*Reflections available during Advent  
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**EDGEWOOD COLLEGE**

1000 Edgewood College Drive  
Madison, WI 53711-1997  
**WWW.EDGEWOOD.EDU**