



THE ONE
WHO
TESTI-
FIES
TO
THESE
THINGS
SAYS
SURELY
I AM
COMING
SOON.
AMEN.
COME,
LORD
JESUS!
THE
GRACE
OF THE
LORD
JESUS
BE WITH
ALL THE
SAINTS.
AMEN.

Reflections

— for the —

SEASON *of*
A D V E N T

EDGEWOOD COLLEGE

— 2022 —

TABLE of CONTENTS

FIRST WEEK of ADVENT

SUN., NOV. 27: <i>Andrew Manion</i> , Isaiah 2:1-5	4
MON., NOV. 28: <i>Amy Schiebel</i> , Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9	5
TUES., NOV. 29: <i>Patricia M. Butler</i> '61, Isaiah 11:1-10	5
WED., NOV. 30: <i>Mike Sweitzer-Beckman</i> , Romans 10:9-18	6
THURS., DEC. 1: <i>Jan L. Richardson</i> , Matthew 7:21, 24-27	6
FRI., DEC. 2: <i>Margaret Noreuil</i> , Isaiah 29:17-24	6
SAT., DEC. 3: <i>Shay Pollard</i> , Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26.....	7

SECOND WEEK of ADVENT

SUN., DEC. 4: <i>Edward Taylor</i> , Romans 15:4-9	8
MON., DEC. 5: <i>Catherine Kiesler</i> '20, Isaiah 35: 1-10	8
TUES., DEC. 6: <i>Nadia Marshall</i> , Isaiah 40: 1-11	9
WED., DEC. 7: <i>Stan Winarski</i> '91, Isaiah 40:25-31.....	9
THURS., DEC. 8: <i>Mary Elizabeth Bathum</i> , Luke 1:26-38	10
FRI., DEC. 9: <i>Veronica Sifuentes</i> , Isaiah 48: 17-19.....	10
SAT., DEC. 10: <i>Michael Meissen</i> , Psalm 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19	11

THIRD WEEK of ADVENT

SUN., DEC. 11: <i>Claire Mand, MA '18</i> , Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10.....	11
MON., DEC. 12: <i>Milton Javier Bravo</i> , Zechariah 2:14-17.....	12
TUES., DEC. 13: <i>Linda Trent '00</i> , Psalm 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23	12
WED., DEC. 14: <i>Emily Harris</i> , Isaiah 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25	13
THURS., DEC. 15: <i>Emma El-Beri</i> , Psalm 30:2, and 4, 5-6, 11-12a, and 13b	13
FRI., DEC. 16: <i>Richard Sims</i> , Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 7-8.....	14
SAT., DEC. 17: <i>Victoria Palmisano</i> , Psalm 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17.....	14

FOURTH WEEK of ADVENT

SUN., DEC. 18: <i>Isabel Rafferty, O.P. '84</i> , Isaiah 7:10-14.....	15
MON., DEC. 19: <i>Ryan O'Dell '15, MA '17</i> , Psalm 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17.....	15
TUES., DEC. 20: <i>Irene Ehrhart</i> , Luke 1:26-38.....	16
WED., DEC. 21: <i>Emily Zoeller, Ed.D. '20</i> , Zephaniah 3:14-18a.....	16
THURS., DEC. 22: <i>Kari Gribble, MBA '09</i> , Luke 1:46-56	17
FRI., DEC. 23: <i>John Fields</i> , Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24.....	17

CHRISTMAS EVE

SAT., DEC. 24: <i>Laurin Dodge, MA '21</i> , Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a-16	18
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CHRISTMAS DAY

SUN., DEC. 25: <i>Mary Ellen Gevelinger, O.P.</i> , Luke 2:1-20	18
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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.

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.

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 Javier Bravo, Vice President for Mission, Values, and Inclusion

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27 _____

Matthew 24:37-44. *Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.*

Today’s Gospel reading is a bit ominous, yet appropriate for the start of Advent: prepare. Advent gives us an opportunity to practice preparing ourselves for the arrival of Jesus, which is something we should be doing all the time. The physical manifestations of preparation for Christmas in my home have always included decorating the house, wearing festive clothes, singing special songs, getting ready for company, pulling out special recipes, and others. It’s important for me to remind myself during this busy season that we do all of these physical preparations in order to help us with our far more important spiritual preparations, preparing our hearts to encounter God. And my challenge, and the thing that Advent should help with, is to remember that I encounter God in every person I meet, every day, all year long.

Andrew Manion, President, Edgewood College

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28 _____

Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9. *Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord. I rejoice because they said to me, “We will go up to the house of the Lord.” And now we have set foot within your gates, O Jerusalem.*

This psalm was written by David. He has been on a journey, which did not all go swimmingly, and he is experiencing the joy of “coming home” to Jerusalem. Here he will meet with friends and others that share his faith. It feels great! He loves this place and wants it to be blessed, peaceful and prosperous. Most of us have a special place like this. For many it is home, especially during the holidays when filled with family and friends. You step inside and the weight of the world falls off your shoulders. You feel the joy of being surrounded by your people.

The isolation of the pandemic has made us appreciate and relish the times when we gather together. Many find this same joy on a weekly basis when they, like David, enter God’s house and feel the joy of gathering with others to raise voices in song, praise and thanksgiving.

Amy Schiebel, Associate Professor, School of Liberal Arts, Education, and the Sciences

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29 _____

Isaiah 11:1-10.. *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength ...*

The greatest of the Messianic prophets, Isaiah, is trying to guide Israel as the wars go on. In 7:14 he foretells the birth of Immanuel and here he speaks so beautifully of the leadership of Immanuel, who will come to save the remnant of Israel and guide it into the future.

Isaiah is prophesying that Emmanuel will be given wisdom and understanding, counsel and strength to guide Israel. Emmanuel—translated ‘God with us’—was then and still is accompanying all his people. Let us be open to what God asks of us. May we ask God’s help in accompanying one another, in being companions on the journey with those who are already part of our lives, and with those we will encounter. May we, in whatever way we are able, accompany those who are poor, homeless, and in need of encouragement on this journey.

Patricia M. Butler '61

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30 _____

Romans 10:9-18. *For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.*

The motto at Edgewood College is *Cor ad Cor Loquitur*, or “Heart Speaks to Heart.” This passage drives home for me that it is not enough to Study and Reflect on a decision process or moral issue with one’s heart, but we are required to Act through outward expression of our beliefs in order to do the works of God.

It can be quite difficult to speak outwardly about our beliefs, or our conclusions on an ethical decision or moral issue. We live in a fraught, divided country. However, at times, we must take the next step toward speaking what is in our hearts in order to define our faith.

Mike Sweitzer-Beckman, Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1 _____

Matthew 7:21, 24-27. *Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock.*

In this parable about the wise man who built his house on rock and the foolish man who built his house on sand, Jesus urges us to dig deeper, as it were, into this homely imagery. He challenges us to recognize how the health of a house (and its inhabitants) depends on what we built it upon. The wholeness of the house, he tells us, rests on its foundation. And for Jesus, our tangible response to him forms the foundation of our dwelling with him. Our practices, our searching, our work to live out his call: these acts are blessings that sustain the structure and help its inhabitants flourish.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2 _____

Isaiah 29:17-24. *Thus says the Lord 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.*

This passage provides hope for change in the future; however, we don't know when change will happen, so we wait. It gives us a picture of what the future might hold for us, but again, we don't know when and the waiting can be difficult. I used to feel frustrated with having to wait such as waiting for a decision to be made, waiting through the illness of a parent or a friend, waiting for better times again once we're "done with Covid." But it's important to think of waiting as a time for reflection, to use that time to help me be more grateful for the time we do have and to appreciate the beauty of the world around us. It's important to remember that there is grace and hope in waiting, especially in the Advent season.

Margaret C. Noreuil, Dean & Professor, Henry Predolin School of Nursing, Business, & Health Sciences

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3 _____

Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26. *The Lord will give you the bread you need and the water for which you thirst. No longer will your Teacher hide himself; but with your own eyes you shall see your Teacher. While from behind, a voice shall sound in your ears: "This is the way; walk in it," when you would turn to the right or to the left.*

This passage gives a tableau of living in proper relation to one another. God provides the rain, rivers, etc., and the animals till the ground, free of oppression; the earth gladly yields, and all have equal access to abundance. There will be a new way of life on Earth amongst a face-to-face God.

Before attending Edgewood College, my Christianity was me-centered. My faith involved a checklist of behaviors and ingrained dogmas of what it looked like to be a Christian, excluding myself from others, only centering on self and God, with an "as long as God is pleased with me" attitude. My inherited dogmas kept me from seeing that a genuine relationship with God depends upon connectedness and a proper connection to all of God's creation. Being a Christian became more effortless and more natural when I learned to see everyone and everything as unique extensions of God, sharing the air, the waters, and the earth with me.

We can begin living, seeing ourselves as equal to every being in our ecosystem, those who rule, those who farm, the poor, the plants, the birds, the waters, and the trees. When you have little or need, trust that your needs will be met, and when you have plenty, trust in God by sharing your surplus or meeting someone else's need. By doing this, we're not only practicing for what's to come, but we're also enacting God here in the now and trusting God's promise.

Shay Pollard, Junior, English Major and Religious Studies Minor

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

Romans 15:4-9. *Whatever was written previously was written for our instruction, that by endurance and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another.*

Today's verses remind me about how truly fortunate I am to serve at Edgewood College. Whatever I need to endure, however I can be a source of encouragement for a student, or a colleague, comes to me from a divine space. I am by nature a positive person – always have been. The source of that energy, though, is not me. I've experienced through the years here (and before) that God's love for us is truly infinite and is a part of each of us. Especially at this time of year, may we all be reminded that when we feel love, feel harmony, offer and receive encouragement, we become God's light for the world, and for each other.

Edward Taylor, Chief of Staff /Chief Communications Officer

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5

Isaiah 35:1-10. *It is for those with a journey to make, and on it the redeemed will walk. Those whom the Lord has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; they will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.*

In this verse, we are reminded that in all our troubles, all our struggles, we must, and can, remain strong because we have the goodness of God behind us. Even as we feel weak, wronged, or challenged, in God, we can find peace, clarity, and understanding. In the darkest times, if we remember to look for God, we will find light, and when we feel forgotten or neglected, God will take us by the hand and show love for us. It can be so difficult to feel strong when things seem to go wrong everywhere we look, but this text shows us how having hope, although seemingly more difficult each day in our world, is what brings us closer to God. Hope fills our life with lightness and invites us to walk along the path that is paved for us.

Catherine Kiesler '20, Coordinator for Case Management

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6

Isaiah 40: 1-11. *The grass withers, the flower wilts, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it. So then, the people is the grass. Though the grass withers and the flower wilts, the word of our God stands forever.*

Comfort can be defined in many ways, varying from person to person. Although comfort may result from grief or wanting, the word itself strikes with positive force. Reflecting on the passage above, grass and flowers alike may bend in the wind, however, they remain firm in their foundation. When the Lord blows on the grass, our sinfulness and impurities are exposed, but this vulnerability leaves room for the gifts of the Divine to be bestowed. Allow the gentle blow of the Lord to assist you in finding comfort, for we are never alone. “Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles...” (Isaiah 4:31).

Nadia Marshall, Sophomore, Art Major

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

Isaiah 40:25-31. *Do you not know, or have you not heard? The Lord is the eternal God, creator of the ends of the earth.*

When I reflect on this passage, especially verses 28-31, I must ask myself an embarrassing question. Do I not know who and what God is? God clearly identifies attributes as our creator, enduring, source of infinite knowledge, and sustainer of us in our weakest moments. If I know who and what God is, then why do I first try solving life’s challenges and obstacles on my own with my methods and call on God only as a last resort?

God promises to renew, support, and strengthen me. As I prepare for Christ’s second coming and reflect on Jesus’s birth during Advent, perhaps an alternative awaits me to rely on God first. God promises to lift me up as with eagle’s wings. Blessings await if I ask.

Stan Winarski, MBA ‘91

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8

Luke 1:26-38. *“How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” 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. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.” Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.*

What a powerful story we hear in this Gospel! We witness the personal and intimate conversation between Mary and Angel Gabriel. We experience Mary asking a simple, brave and intelligent question, “How can this be?” What I love most is Gabriel’s answer to seek out her relative Elizabeth who also is experiencing an immense change in her life. The loving and supportive relationship between these two women gives Mary the strength to say yes to being the mother of Jesus. It is our loving and supportive relationships that give us the strength we need to do our work in this world.

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Bathum, Professor, Henry Predolin School of Nursing, Business, and Health Sciences

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

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

How simple is this statement, yet, how difficult is this to do? Do we select which of the commandments or ways to follow? Today, it is often hard to follow all that God has directed of us as we can easily get caught up in things of this world. Things that distract us and pull us away from God. By creating a daily habit to include scripture and prayer, we can refocus on his desires of us and follow God more clearly. This world is designed to pull us away from God, away from heaven and to destroy families. But do not despair because if we remain faithful in his path and instruct our children in these same ways, then God will hold them special to him.

Veronica Sifuentes, Enrollment Data, CRM, and Application Manager

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10

Psalms 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19. *Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved. Once again, O Lord of hosts, look down from heaven, and see, take care of this vine, and protect what your right hand has planted.*

In our daily life, when we experience both highs and lows, to whom do we turn? This passage reminds us to “turn toward’ the Lord. Our belief in a greater influence upon our life can be a source of comfort and equips us with peace and confidence, we are not alone. We are cared for, loved, accepted, and our faith in the Lord will help us every step of our journey. Every day, in every way!

I am fortunate to have the support of a spouse, family, friends, and community. In our life experiences, we turn to these guides and mentors in our life for strength, happiness, and support. Through this biblical passage, I am reminded the Lord wants to be present in my life, is there for me, and will be a guide if I maintain a close relationship with the Lord and look “toward,” rather than going alone.

Dr. Michael Meissen, Associate Director of Clinical Experiences and Accelerated Secondary Program Coordinator

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10. *Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you.*

For me, this reading recalls the importance of patient strength in the face of hardship and challenge. My mom used to say good things come to those who wait. While this was probably said regarding a request for a glass of Kool-Aid, it has come to be a phrase that I repeat to myself often. In my day-to-day life, I sometimes feel a need to rush to a solution or to despair that there isn’t a ready answer. With time, I’ve learned that it can be so much more powerful to mindfully muddle in the difficult and uncomfortable and work within myself to find inner strength in that process. I’ve learned a lot about myself and others through patient and reflective waiting and that alone has been a joyful reward in the end.

Claire Mand, MA ‘18, Director of Student Life

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12

Zechariah 2:14-17. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! See, I am coming to dwell among you, says the Lord. Many nations shall join themselves to the Lord on that day, and they shall be his people, and he will dwell among you, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.*

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, 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 always remain under Her protection, but especially during this Advent season as we await the coming of her Son.

Dr. Milton Javier Bravo, Vice President for Mission, Values, and Inclusion

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13

Psalms 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23. *The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves. The Lord redeems the lives of his servants; no one incurs guilt who takes refuge in him.*

This passage reminds us all that God accepts us where we are at and who we are, no matter our transgressions. God knows we are not perfect, that we can come to him anytime we want and will be accepted with open arms for God loves us no matter what.

This is a good reminder that no matter what we do or how many times we fall, God is there with outstretched arms to welcome us into the fold. It's hard to admit our faults, we feel unworthy of any of God's love, God accepts us without judgement.

When someone criticizes you or hurts you, remember God's unconditional love and compassion, to turn the other cheek, to love your enemies and those who persecute you, accept them with open arms of forgiveness and love.

Linda Trent '00

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14 _____

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

Justice. Whenever I hear the word, I feel a fire warming within me. An energy asking of me to take notice of what's occurring around me and to act. Racial justice, social and economic justice, environmental justice. "Let justice descend, O heavens, like dew from above, let the skies drop it down." To read it in this passage and to see justice described as dew being dropped like a gentle rain struck me as something worth pausing for and contemplating further.

I used to think the loud cry of injustice must be answered with a stronger, louder cry. Now, I am challenged by the words of this passage to reflect on justice as the soft dew that coats the Earth each day-- its gentle rain, a misty reminder to notice and work to correct the injustices in our world.

Emily Harris, Area Director of Housing Operations

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15 _____

Psalms 30:2, and 4, 5-6, 11-12a, and 13b. *I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me. I will extol you, O Lord, for you drew me clear and did not let my enemies rejoice over me. You changed my mourning into dancing; O Lord, my God, forever will I give you thanks.*

As I read the psalm, two phrases stood out to me: "for you drew me clear" and "you changed my mourning into dancing." How do we get drawn closer to God in order to feel these actions in our lives? There are probably many possibilities, yet one came to mind – the sacrament of reconciliation. I still recall my second grade self taking in the words of our Priest before confession, "afterwards you may feel like you are walking on air" (even though in that moment I couldn't help but feel like I was about to get in trouble). Laying out those things I may not have wanted to admit to myself, having God hear and forgive, there is a clearing, a cleansing. And leaving I felt a weight lifted off my shoulders like I was walking on air, renewed, closer to God and to myself, a mourning turned to dancing moment. This Advent I want to continue to give thanks for what the psalmist repeats: "I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me!"

Emma El-Beri, Junior, Criminal Justice Major

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16

Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 7-8. *O God, let all the nations praise you! May the nations be glad and exult because you rule the peoples in equity; the nations on the earth you guide.*

When reading this scripture, the word that catches my attention is “praise.” The word praise elicits different feelings for me and transports me back to my childhood. As a child, giving God praise was a word uttered often in my early foundational memories of church. During my adolescence, I went to churches where the emphasis on praising God was interwoven in my experience and understanding of who God is. In Chicago, I can recall the women at my church dressed in their fancy Sunday dresses and glorious hats sitting in the front row with their fans waving to ward off the summer heat. Often, the smell of soul food in the church kitchen wafted through the air all the way up to where I sat to record that day's sermon for our Pastor. Furthermore, "Praise God" served as a cue from our Pastor to the white robed choir to break out into song and fill the room with electricity from their remarkable voices: “O God, let all the nations praise you!”

Richard Sims, Executive Director for Student Equity & Inclusion

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

Psalm 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17. *Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever. The mountains shall yield peace for the people, and the hills justice. He shall defend the afflicted amongst the people, save the children of the poor.*

We should all work to find a space where we help to enable justice and peace. It is important to remember that, in all things we do, we should take time to ponder the concept of acting and making decisions which promote justice and peace. Each time we act, we have the ability to contribute to a more just world which supports those less fortunate and peace amongst those who are in conflict. In all we do we should seek fairness, justice, love, and peace so that we can be contributors to and members of a more inclusive and just society and world community.

Victoria M. Palmisano, Associate Dean, Business, Communication, and Innovation

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18

Isaiah 7:10-14. *The Isaiah said: Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people, must you also weary my God? Therefore, the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.*

Is your God fear-inducing, ready to condemn and punish? Ahaz in this reading seems to think so. Fortunately, the prophet Isaiah does not endorse this image of a small, mean God. Personally, I am so touched these days with the cosmic generosity of a God who with compassion pours life into all the living, who bursts through the ordinary everyday with pure holiness. “Therefore, God will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.” What could be more ordinary or more holy than the birth of a child into this world even at a time like this, perhaps especially at a time like ours with so much greed, corruption, death and despair. These ordinary miracles remind us that God is truly with us. Let us be alert today to recognize the signs of God in the midst of our everyday.

Isabel Rafferty, O.P. '84, Retired faculty member, Art Department

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19

Psalms 71:3-4A, 5-6AB, 16-17. *My mouth shall be filled with your praise, and I will sing your glory! Be my rock of refuge, a stronghold to give me safety, for you are my rock and fortress.*

Reading through this Psalm, there is not one line that stands out, but rather the whole message throughout of having a strong sense of faith. In the world we live in today, it is easy to get wrapped up in everything going wrong around us. Whether it be global conflict or a bad grade on a test, there are stressors that influence us every day. This reading is encouraging because it reaffirms that even with daily stressors, we can have faith that God is watching over us, protecting us, and will help us make it through the ups and downs of life!

Ryan O'Dell '15, MA '17, Director of Undergraduate Admissions

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20

Luke 1:26-38. *“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end.”*

This passage reminds us why God chose Mary. When the angel came to her, he told Mary not to fear; “Do not be afraid.” Do not be afraid of bringing the Son of the Living God into the world. God chose her, and God chooses us - day after day. Sometimes, it’s easier to fear our own potential than to place total trust in a higher power. However, in the same way God had a plan for Mary, God has one for each of us. I don’t know what my plan entails, but I desire to follow Mary’s example of humility and grace as it unfolds. How do you place trust in a future that is unknown?

Irene Ehrhart, Sophomore, Environmental Studies and Psychology Majors

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21

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

Our God is a joyful God! Whether we imagine God as a shepherd, king, parent, or guide, Zephaniah makes clear for us that God is full of joy, and this joy is not subdued.

God wants joy for us. Here, God tells us to shout and sing for joy, with all our hearts, for renewal. We might think of this joy as reciprocal: God’s people are rejoicing because God has forgiven them, and God, in turn, sings joyfully for the love restored. When we let joy in, we amplify it for God, too.

We can embrace joy by tackling judgment and fear. In what ways might God be trying to remove judgment we face, so that we can experience joy? What fears can we release, to make room for joy? What do we need to do to join this celebration?

Emily Zoeller, Ed.D. '20, Assistant Professor of Education

THURSDAY, 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...You have mercy on those who fear you in every generation. You have shown the strength of your arm and have scattered the proud in their conceit. You have cast down the mighty from their thrones and have lifted up the lowly. You have filled the hungry with good things, and the rich you have sent away empty.”*

Mary’s song of praise is very profound given that she was an unwed, peasant, teenage girl. Although she could have negatively taken this news that would drastically change her life, she used it to clearly demonstrate her deep personal relationship with God and accepted her mission without hesitation. She confidently knew that God would guide her through this very important mission. How many times in our life do we doubt the tasks ahead or doubt our own ability to overcome daily challenges? If we focus our hearts and minds on knowing that God will lead us through all situations and keep God the focus of our lives, we can live a more confident and fulfilling life, just as Mary did. She proceeds with a description of who will receive mercy and who will be left empty and wanting. God will not fill believers with superficial hope but rather with an abundance of grace and blessings.

Kari Gribble, MBA ‘09, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23

Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24. *“Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the one whom you seek will suddenly come to the temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—behold, my anointed is coming, says the God of hosts. But who can endure that great day, and who can stand when my messenger appears? For the Chosen One is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; sitting as a refiner and purifier of silver...”*

When it finally happens -- the moment you have been waiting for all of your life — and it isn't anything like what you have imagined, what do you do then?

Dr. John Fields, Assistant Professor, Philosophy

CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24 _____

Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a-16. *Go, tell my servant David, “Thus says the Lord: Should you build me a house to dwell in? It was I who took you from the pasture and from the care of the flock to be commander of my people Israel.”*

Should you build me a house to dwell in? If we were to answer ‘yes,’ what would follow? Logically we might want to ask further questions about the assembly instructions. In many stages of our lives, however, we may have fewer questions on *building* and more questions on *disassembling*... for instance, when we discover God is to be found outside of the “foundation” we poured, the “walls” we built, the “structure” we crafted, the “home” we made. What might happen when we set down the instructions, turn to the one who has been with us wherever we went (2 Sam: 9), and humbly ask, ‘what if we tried this?’ or ‘not sure I followed that last step, thoughts on what to do next?’ In the infinite creativity of God, the Builder, perhaps we need not fear the renovations or demolitions – those might be just the steps God longs to be invited to in the construction.

Laurin Dodge, MA '21, Assistant Director of Campus Ministry

CHRISTMAS DAY, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25 _____

Luke 2:1-20. *“And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.*

“And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” I have often wondered what were all these things that Mary kept reflecting on? This scripture passage is full of suggestions! Most of the stars of this passage are unexpected characters.

Caesar Augustus is interested in surveying the “whole world.” What is his view of the whole world? Mary, Joseph and the new baby lying in the manger are silent, with no word escaping their lips. The baby’s cries don’t count.

Shepherds' women and men are stunned and fearful to hear the angel speaking good news of great joy! Smelling like their sheep, they travel to find this savior-baby, then tell everyone the news. They amaze their listeners and glorify and praise God for all they have heard. These probably illiterate guardians of sheep, the lowest paid workers, listened to the angel, received the message, and went to see for themselves. In the end, they became preachers!

What are you reflecting on and preaching about today?

Mary Ellen Gevelinger, O.P., President Emerita, Edgewood College

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

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We welcome your feedback.

Please email [**milbravo@edgewood.edu**](mailto:milbravo@edgewood.edu)



*Reflections available during Advent
at: edgewood.edu/reflections*



EDGEWOOD COLLEGE

1000 Edgewood College Drive

Madison, WI 53711-1997

WWW.EDGEWOOD.EDU

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