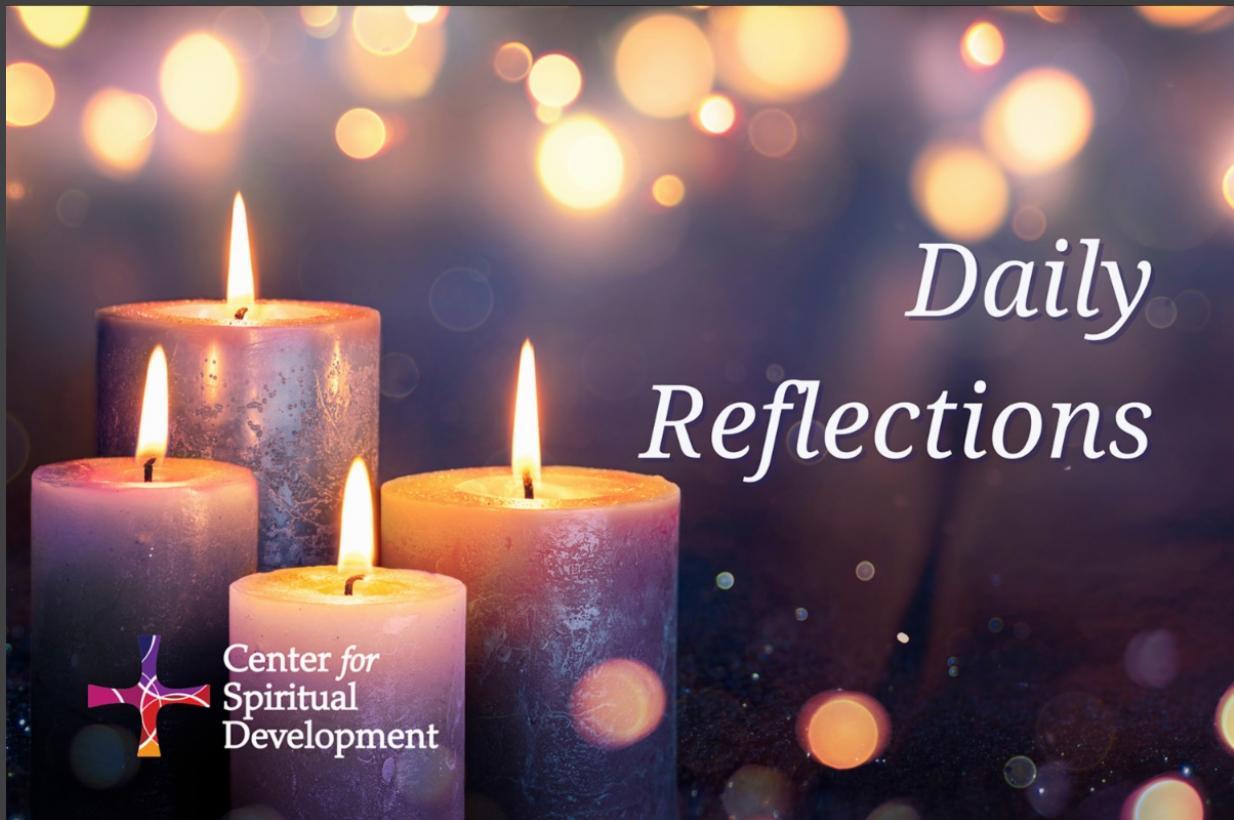


December 14, 2025



THE GOD OF HOPE IS IN OUR MIDST

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

Excerpt from Today's Gospel

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me."

MATTHEW 11:2-6

Reflection

Times of suffering, persecution, and confusion often bring on a sense of doubt and fear. Given John's question in the above scripture, this might have been John the Baptist's situation. I, too, have been there, done that! How about you?

I can easily understand John's wondering if he has been on the right track. John was on a mission to "**prepare the way for the Lord.**" John the Baptist called people to repentance and Baptism in the Jordan river. I imagine that he sensed the impending doom that would cost him his life. After all the years of ministry in readiness for the Messiah, John was checking his assumptions and confirming his hope: "**Are you the one who is to come, or are we to look for another?**"

This same question is mine at times, especially when I experience the uncertainty of moments when I need to be adaptable in the changing realities. So much in society seems to be breaking down and shifting rapidly. I strive to stay the course and live in hope that God dwells among us still, and that I am doing God's work.

In prayer and reflection, I try to make sense of all the happenings of our times. I search the Word of God to assist me and nurture my soul. I ask for the insight, wisdom, and grace of God to faithfully proclaim that the "**God of hope is in our midst.**" This was my stated desire as I made my perpetual vows as a Sister of St. Joseph over fifty years ago. I find assurance in the promise that God is faithful and never takes back the gifts given.

Like John the Baptist, I look around and seek reassurance. I know in deep listening and contemplation that God's response is like the one Jesus messaged to John.

Look around you, open your eyes and see the good, kind, compassionate, holy, and simply ordinary things that are happening, flowing from the heart of graced people.

- I see God in the beauty of each day and in the faces of those who seek to do good with limited resources.
- Reassurance comes in those who awakened to the needs of others around them and are reaching out to assist one another and offer simple human kindness and respect.
- I rejoice in God's gentle strength made visible in so many people who care

for children, the elderly, the sick and vulnerable among us every day.

- Goodness is made tangible in the self-giving of parents trying to discern what is best for their family by attending to their children and making decisions for their good first, often forgoing what those parents may want for themselves.
- Hope arises in the call to listen and discern together with mutuality so to be a Church of worshiping and serving community -- a community of inclusion.
- God's healing love is made tangible by health professionals who continue to graciously care for and tend those who are severely ill with infections, cancer, and other debilitating disease.
- Compassion is born in people who are present to the countless families living with violence, fear, and oppression -- the situation of too many people around the world.

In these few examples I must respond, "Yes, the God of Hope **is** in our midst," and seen in the faces of people who are kind, compassionate, loving, and tenderhearted, who lend their gentle strength and mercy to others -- including the stranger and those some think undeserving.



Photo by Egor Kamelev

For Pondering

Ask yourself:

- Where have I noticed the presence of God today, this week?
- Who today reveals God's love and compassion?

- In what way does creation reflect God's abiding presence?

For Prayer

*Thank you, gracious and loving God,
for helping me perceive your presence in the world
despite the strife I also perceive.
You carry me, inspire, and love me into life.
I praise and thank you for the hope I experience
within my heart as you reveal yourself in all
who are good, kind, loving, compassionate and merciful.
Thank you for the many and diverse acts of kindness
that assure me of your abiding presence.
Please, deepen my faith, trust, and hope in you
as you reveal yourself in the weary yet beautiful world,
and in the actions of gracious people around me.
You are the God of hope dwelling in our midst.
Amen.*

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