Reflection for the 2nd Sunday of Advent
December 8, 2019
Sr. Mary Karen Kelly, GNSH

1st Reading: Isaiah 11: 1-10
Responsorial: Psalm 72
2nd Reading: Romans 15: 4-9
Gospel: Matthew 3: 1-12

Few things bring more joy to a gardener’s heart than the sight of a new leaf on an otherwise leafless plant or a bulb sprouting unexpectedly on a dark morning. We welcome the hope this tiny bit of life inspires, along with dreams for a vigorous future! Such events did take place recently on our tiny enclosed porch garden at the Lafayette-Redeemer.

When bulbs sprout unexpectedly at the very beginning of winter, my heart rejoices. I praise our God of life who uses this sign to remind me to be a bearer of hope when current national and political situations could cancel any such notions.

*Hope messages abound when I am alert and watchful.*

Recently my niece Colleen hosted a weekend celebration of Thanksgiving for the Family. Many attended the Villanova vs University of Delaware football game earlier on Saturday. All were glad to see Colleen’s son Tom playing for U Delaware. Villanova fans were happy with the final score. In addition to her Mother, Colleen welcomed aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers, cousins, nieces and nephews from Florida, Georgia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. It was so typical: a noisy, hungry, appreciative, laughter-filled, memory-making family gathering.

On Sunday afternoon we had assembled in the family room for a group photo when Tom finally arrived home from U Delaware. The whole family cheered in welcome as he entered the room. The first photo shows every face alight with joy and some arms raised in salute as they caught their first glimpse of him. The second photo shows Tom lying on the floor in front of the family, his face aglow from the warmth of his welcome home.

Not all grace-filled moments occur in church. The weekend events at Colleen’s serve as a completion of the scriptural admonition to

“Welcome one another as Christ welcomes you for the Glory of God.”

Happy Advent!

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**Prayer for Lighting the Advent Candle: Second Week**

God of power and mercy open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

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