

**Preaching: December 24, 2021**

*“You, my child, shall be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins. In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Luke 1:76–79*

As members of the Dominican Order and, indeed, in all religious orders, we pray this very phrase in the Canticle of Zechariah in our morning prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours. It is, in its very essence, our proclamation of the coming of Christ where John the Baptist is the dawn announcing the rising sun Jesus Christ. It is a light that will shed God’s truth and light our path towards God, a path that leads to peace in our lives and in the life to come.

How then should we live our lives with this great expectation? Like Zechariah, we wait with faith and perseverance for this coming light as experienced each year during Advent but also as in this lived experience of life to eternal life. Even in times when our faith falters, we must persevere for God always gives us a chance to work through our human failings. Trust in God and offer your troubles up to him. He will manifest his love and power through you. Proclaim His name and preach the Truth so that you may be the first light of “dawn” and bring “Light” to others.

May this Christmas Eve be the dawn of first light that dispels “darkness” into “Light” for you and your loved ones!