

The Art of Pondering

“But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” Luke 2:19b

Advent is to ponder.

If you don't take time to turn everything off and ponder sometime this week, you are left with all that is temporal, ordinary and fleeting about Christmas.

Stop and ponder.

Luke tells us in his gospel that Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. What happens when you catch a glimpse of God's glory? You treasure it. She could have griped about the travel arrangements, the lack of planning, the constant need to improvise. But Mary, in a barn full of visiting animals, horses, mules, stray dogs, camels, splinters, hay, horse manure, kept all these things treasured in her heart.

That night she had to contend with Joseph's snoring. And those shepherds, loudly recounting angelic visitations. They probably woke the Baby several times that night. But, just before dawn, with all asleep, except Mary and a mule, she gathered from the hope chest of the near past a tapestry of memories –

The beautiful colors of Gabriel's clothes,
The look on the face of Elizabeth when she turned and saw Mary,
The clamor of packing for the dreaded tax appointment,
“No Vacancy” signs,
The nervous, frustrated father,
The incarnate kicks,
The looming grief,
The tiny hands that would pierce her heart.

She wept and smiled. She experienced an orchestra of emotions in concert with the breeze that swept through the Bethlehem hills like a Spirit newly released.

And Mary pondered.

Will you join her tonight?