

# Companions IN PRAYER



St. Clare Sisters  
Wheaton, IL

IN THIS ISSUE | CLOSE TO OUR HEARTS | HOPE IN FROZEN TIMES

## CLOSE TO OUR HEARTS



We want to thank our many individual donors who make our ministry possible. We also want to thank and list the organizations who support our work. You are truly our *Companions in Prayer*.

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## Hope on a Frozen Street

Imagine standing on a frozen Minnesota street, hearing a whistle blow while a monk's sandals tread 2,300 miles toward Washington. In that moment, hope and fear collide.

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," to quote Charles Dickens' novel [A Tale of Two Cities](#) (published in 1859). Set at a time of contradictions—an age of wisdom and foolishness,



**Channel of Peace**

light and darkness, and hope and despair—this could describe our times as well. Watching ICE occupy the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, we see a period of new possibilities with AI alongside the foolishness of social media. We also witness expanding space exploration while the darkness of war rages

in Gaza and Ukraine. Hope arises from non-violent protests, while despair follows the deaths of René Good and Alex Petty.

There are so many disconnections in our world today, that it's hard to find a place of balance. We are witnessing a change in governmental structures that may be helpful, but they feel like a tear in our social fabric. The stock market is higher than it has ever been, and many people feel confident about their retirement portfolios. At the same time, grocery shoppers face an "affordability" problem because of higher prices. Confidence in markets doesn't match our increased expenses. Balancing on the edge of these issues—affordability, immigration and war—raises nervousness and anxiety among many of us with Lent here, how do we restore our spiritual life and focus on our faith for guidance?

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Lent is the Christian season of preparation, inviting us to pause, reflect, and turn inward before the celebration of Easter. Many believers mark the forty-day journey with fasting, intentional prayer, and acts of almsgiving. In the same spirit as the monks who walk 2,300 miles for peace, we are called to a quieter pilgrimage—perhaps fasting from non-essential media, setting aside a daily moment of silence, or donating a modest sum to a local food bank. In the darkness of war and the clamor of headlines, Lent offers a candle-lit space where we can listen for God’s whisper of peace and ask ourselves, “How can I become a channel of peace for those around me?”

A light of hope comes for me, when I hear about the Minneapolis community coming together to protect their neighbors. I’m inspired by the large number of citizens protesting non-violently. Immigration must be addressed, but not by hunting people down and separating them from their families without due process.

While the headlines scream war and immigration enforcement, a quieter story unfolds in neighborhoods across the Twin Cities. This is the best that we are as a community: neighbors watching each other to protect one another. A simple whistle alerts the public when there is danger, and constant video documentation provides evidence.

In coordinated efforts to bring food to fearful families, I see compassion confronting the bullying violence. Good people across the country venture out into the winter cold simply to say, “Not this way.”



As you know, the Buddhist monks walked 2,300 miles on a “Walk for Peace”. Their purpose—a 100-plus-day journey from Texas to Washington, D.C.—is to promote national healing, unity, compassion, and mindfulness.

These protesters and walkers exemplify the need for change. Their physical presence in the midst of what they want to change is powerful.

This Lent, I feel the worst of times when I see ICE hunting immigrants, yet I also see the best of times when citizens and monks stand up to say, “Not this way.”

**A Guiding Prayer:**

*Make me a channel of your peace,  
where there is despair in life, let me bring hope;  
where there is darkness, only light;  
and where there is sadness, ever joy.*

As Dickens observed, we live in both the best and the worst of times; may we each choose to be a ‘channel of peace’ that turns our darkest moments into light.

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WE ARE PRAYING WITH AND FOR YOU.