

Advent Reflections

December 24, 2019



The angels announced on the Christmas night, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will" (Luke 2:14). We sing about "peace on earth" in carols and find that phrase on Christmas cards. Our Franciscan heritage makes us sensitive to the message of peace; rooted in the Franciscan values, we are committed to working for peace in the world.

While all of the above is true, sometimes we may find ourselves struggling for peace. Busy lifestyles, the stress of rapid changes, and too much information bombarding us every minute would be enough to destroy one's inner peace. Let us add to that list unavoidable mistakes and regrets, misunderstandings and judgements, and the peace that we long for becomes a delusion.

It does not seem possible to achieve peace. Nevertheless, do not worry! Tonight, God comes to bless us with peace (Psalm 29:11). "It isn't like the peace this world can give" (John 14:27). Receive it. Absorb the stillness and silence of this holy night. Take time to be in touch with your inner self. Be still and wait.

"...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 1:79)

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Reading 1 [2 SM 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16](#)

When King David was settled in his palace,
and the LORD had given him rest from his enemies on every side,
he said to Nathan the prophet,
"Here I am living in a house of cedar,
while the ark of God dwells in a tent!"
Nathan answered the king,
"Go, do whatever you have in mind,
for the LORD is with you."
But that night the LORD spoke to Nathan and said:
"Go, tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD:
Should you build me a house to dwell in?"

"It was I who took you from the pasture
and from the care of the flock
to be commander of my people Israel.
I have been with you wherever you went,
and I have destroyed all your enemies before you.
And I will make you famous like the great ones of the earth.
I will fix a place for my people Israel;
I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place
without further disturbance.
Neither shall the wicked continue to afflict them as they did of old,
since the time I first appointed judges over my people Israel.
I will give you rest from all your enemies.
The LORD also reveals to you
that he will establish a house for you.
And when your time comes and you rest with your ancestors,
I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins,
and I will make his Kingdom firm.
I will be a father to him,
and he shall be a son to me.
Your house and your Kingdom shall endure forever before me;
your throne shall stand firm forever."

Responsorial Psalm [PS 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 AND 29](#)

R.(2) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

The favors of the LORD I will sing forever;
through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness.
For you have said, "My kindness is established forever";
in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

"I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to David my servant:

Forever will I confirm your posterity
and establish your throne for all generations."

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

"He shall say of me, 'You are my father,
my God, the rock, my savior.'

Forever I will maintain my kindness toward him,
and my covenant with him stands firm."

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Alleluia

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal light, sun of justice:
come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel [LK 1:67-79](#)

Zechariah his father, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied, saying:

"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
for he has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of his servant David.
Through his prophets he promised of old
that he would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.
He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hand of our enemies,
free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.
You, my child, shall be called the 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."