

## **He shall be Peace!**

Today is the last Sunday before the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord. We remember that throughout the season of Advent, we have been invited in different ways to prepare for this feast, which we will celebrate within the week, Christmas. This feast is the celebration of the fulfillment of the promises God made to his people, the coming of God to be with us so that we become one with God. He comes to bring the peace of God to us. Thus, the prophet Micah points out in the first reading that “he shall be Peace” as prophet Isaiah describes him also as the “prince of peace” (Is 9:5) and on the midnight mass we shall read the Gospel of Luke where the Angels will sing “Glory to God, peace on earth.” Therefore, on this last Sunday of Advent, we reflect on how ready we are to welcome the peace of God in our lives and become agents and channels of peace.

Peace is more than the absence of war. It is more internal than external. It flows from inside and manifests itself in our everyday life. The peace of God is synonymous with the presence of God in our lives. We work for peace by bringing the presence of God into our lives. Peace has many components, and when these components are not there, true peace will exist. There will be no peace without reconciliation and forgiveness with God and one another. There will be no peace without justice. Thus, Pope Paul VI said: “if you want peace, search for justice.” There will be no peace without sacrifice. Christ won the peace of God for us through his life of sacrifice, as the 2nd reading describes. There will be no peace if we do not recognize, accept, and appreciate the gifts in others and thank God for them, an invitation in the gospel today.

The gospel passage, the visit of Mary to Elizabeth, shows us a practical example of what peace among the relatives can do. Mary set out to visit her cousin after receiving the news of her six months pregnancy from Angel Gabriel. Mary appreciated the gift Elizabeth received, and Elizabeth equally enjoyed the greater gift Mary has received to become the mother of God. Both rejoice in God’s blessings. This is what peace can do in our family. Peace helps to rejoice together and carry the burden of trials together. The material gifts we give people this season to wish them a happy season mean much. Still, the more extraordinary gifts we can provide are the gift of acceptance, tolerance, understanding, forgiveness, and peace. We can buy the material gifts from the shopping malls. Still, these immaterial gifts are from God, and we have to continue calling him to furnish us with these gifts so that we share them and be able to be his true children by being peacemakers. Amen.

***“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God” (Matt 5:9).***