

Peace

What is your idea of a peaceful day? Is it a day of solitude in the mountains or beside the still waters of a placid lake? Is it a rainy day, curled up in front of the fireplace, engrossed in a good book? The image that comes up in most people's minds is the absence of distractions and worries, and the ability to do their own thing. People want to be free from what troubles them. As they seek peace they choose the setting that helps them relax. We've all experienced peaceful times. It is wonderful, relaxing and refreshing. You don't have to wait for a rainy or snowy day, or your next summer vacation. The setting is any place where you allow God to be in charge. He can give you peace in the midst of chaos.



Our 4th Advent candle celebrates the anticipation of the peace that Jesus brings. Jesus said, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33) Notice, He doesn't promise a perfect, trouble-free world. He certainly encountered troubles in His life! But, Jesus conquered the world. By putting our trust in Him we can, too.



Peace comes in several relationships. Jesus can make them all happen.

- Jesus helps us to be at **peace with God**, if we are believers. *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1.)* The word justified merely means to be right with God. God forgives our sins, if we ask. Then, we are right with God.
- We can enjoy the **peace of God**, living without fear and worry. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* Here is the best part. The verse continues with the familiar words: *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)*
- We can also be at **peace with each other**. Jesus teaches us the right way to live, and to relate to others in love: *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God (Matthew 5:9).*

The Christmas story tells us of the upcoming peace when "the great company of heaven" appeared with the angel, who was reassuring the shepherds in the field, saying, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"* (Luke 2:14). As a result, the shepherds went to see the baby Jesus, no longer afraid. We can be with Him, too.

Being at peace is how we overcome our troubles by trusting God. Jesus said: *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid (John 14:27).*

Question: How can you show your trust in God with your life, so that you can be at peace with God, because of God, and with others?

Scripture: *Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you (2 Thessalonians 3:16)*

Prayer: Lord, we seek peace in our lives. We thank you for the forgiveness that allows us to have peace with God, to live without fear, so that we can experience your peace. And finally, Lord, we thank you for your example of how to be at peace with other people – through love. We welcome the celebration of your birth, and the peace you offer us. Amen.