

## Mid-Week Moment – Let There Be Peace on Earth, and Let It Begin With Me

Perhaps you have been following the 2,300-mile Walk of Peace that has stretched from Fort Worth, Texas, to Washington, D.C. I wrote a devotion about them the week that the 19 Buddhist Monks came through North Carolina, less than 20 miles from my home. Their journey was not easy. They marched through the severe winter weather that kept half the nation sequestered in their homes for more than two weeks. The mission was so important that they persevered through it to continue their trek! They arrived in DC on day 108 – yesterday – and today will visit the Lincoln Memorial and hold a concluding ceremony at the Peace Monument in front of the US Capitol.

The monks don't look like us, and their religion is based on different principles. That doesn't matter. They invite people from all walks of life and all faiths to seek peace and unity in our world.

Their travels are not a demonstration or protest. Their spiritual leader said, "We walk not to protest, but to awaken the peace that already lives within each of us." Although their journey traveled through 8 states, peace is not a destination; it is a place in our hearts.



The Walk for Peace did command our attention. Large crowds gathered wherever they were on their journey, and the news coverage was overwhelmingly positive. People are receptive to their message of hope. Maybe we can get past the divisions of our nation and embrace others who are different than us. God created us all. We are a stronger nation because of the uniqueness of its people. Let us move forward in unity, striving for peace through compassion and appreciating the value of others. *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all (Romans 12:18).*

The Monks have completed their pilgrimage and will return home on February 12. Now, it is up to us. How do we seek peace with those around us?

So, the question is: what do we do now? Is February 12 back to "business as usual"? I pray that the monumental effort of these 19 Monks will not be in vain, but will awaken the sense of peace that is within each one of us. How will you promote an attitude of peace and unity among those around you? I urge you to make a personal goal to be an instrument of peace, compassion, and acceptance of others.

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.