



**‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth Peace, among those whom He favours.’
Christmas 2023**

If there ever was a time, when we prayed for this proclamation to be true on earth, it is now, in our world today. As we note each day our news stories are filled with events of war, unrest, hostage taking, and a lack of respect for human life itself. So much do we desire peace on earth, peace in our land, and peace in our hearts. Can this ever be possible? As we celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace, will His peace touch the hearts of all those who long for it?

These questions are important especially today. We seek some peace and comfort in our lives and yet we are surrounded by upset and noise. This applies not just to the world around us, but also at times to our own personal lives. Where will we find this peace?

In the message of Christmas and in the weeks we prepared to celebrate this important feast, we asked the Lord to instil some sense of peace and calm within us even in the midst of all the turmoil and busyness that mark this time of the year. Today a light will shine upon us, says the prophet Isaiah. A light that is unlike the light of this world. This light comes from above and it is the light of God in Jesus Christ His Son. This light will not only bring some peace within our hearts but it will also help us to see the way to bring peace into our daily living. Our openness to this light, is a sign of our willingness to see this season and this feast in it's true spirit. This is not just a holiday or a time for gift giving and fancy meals or decorations, it is a time for us to examine our hearts and to discover if we have allowed the light of Jesus to touch us and to guide us especially in our relations with each other and in our desire for peace.

If our heart is open to this light and peace, then our relationships will change. There will be a greater sense of love and respect for one another. There will exist a greater sense of appreciation and gratitude for the abundance that we have. There will be a true sense of compassion and concern for others visible in our outreach to help, especially those who are less fortunate in our society. There will exist within us a sense of reconciliation and forgiveness, to reestablish bonds and relationships, especially in our families, that may have been broken through anger, argument or jealousy.

This spirit can change our life and give us a deeper appreciation for the gift of life itself which we enjoy and also prompt us to pray for and to work for peace in our world. So in the midst of the turmoil and upset we find around us, let us take a moment to pray in silence to God for peace in our world. We pray for the change of hearts in those who can bring peace to mankind. A simple time of prayer is all that we need to do during this busy time.

May the days that surround Christmas and may the celebration of this great feast with our families and friends, be a time for us to allow some peace and goodness to be made visible in our world. A Merry and Holy Christmas to all.

+Fred J. Colli
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