



Living in God's Peace

You might have noticed that each week in Advent we are adding a new candle to the cover of the "Pac". There is a tradition that has named these candles, and the second one is Peace. John the Baptist doesn't sound like a "peacenik" to most of us. He is the revival shouter. He is trying to get our attention.

In the same way, there are those who shout peace all the time, but we look around us and all we see is war. I remember seeing a young girl on television when I was just older than she was. She told about her whole life had been lived knowing nothing but war in the world. I related to that. From the time I can remember, there has always been war and the fear of war. I was one of those kids who learned to hide under a desk in case an atomic bomb fell. We realize now how hopeless that kind of reaction would be, but it helped us feel a little safer, I guess.

I don't know how to stop war. I don't know how to do that any more than I know how to keep people from hurting each other or abusing children or arguing about politics and religion. I'm not one who is good at stepping into a "situation" and calming things down. I feel very frustrated when things like that happen. But I do know when I am getting to the point of "blowing my cool" and I realize I have to do something about that.

Each of us has to look at ourselves and begin to work out how we will live with each other. Sometimes it takes intervention – maybe a counselor or a pastor to

help us see things a little more clearly. Sometimes it just takes a good friend or a neighbor to show us how to live. That may be our mission – showing people how to live in peace.

Each week we “pass the peace”. We greet each other with “the peace of the Lord” be with you. We like that time. But when we leave this place, do we take that peace with us or do we park it at the door until next week? What does our time of prayer, praise and thanksgiving do for us? My own hope is that it is our fuel for the coming days, it is the encounter with God and with his people that keeps us on the proper path and gives us the energy to get on with life.

Peace in our lives is important. Sometimes we find that peace difficult to come by. Perhaps we need to set aside some time in our lives to be quiet each day and to think about what God has done for us and to seek the path that he wants us to walk.

Many of us seek out God’s word in the Bible. Some of us are discovering that some of the things we are reading, we don’t like – people being cast into the outer darkness, women forbidden from talking in church, many of the prayers in the psalms and other places praying for God to harm others so that the “good” side wins. When we read these things we find that it’s OK to ask a lot of questions and in our questioning we learn more than if we just sat and “accepted”.

Having trouble passing that peace on in your life? Worry not. God has a lot of it stored up and the day will come when you will find it and say “so THAT’S what it’s all about!” Live each day in the peace of the Lord.

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CMK

--- Thoughts of the Week
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