

Reflection of Our Lady's Message 25th December 2011

“Dear children! Also today, in my arms I am carrying my Son Jesus to you, for Him to give you His peace. Pray, little children, and witness so that in every heart, not human but God's peace may prevail, which no one can destroy. It is peace in the heart which God gives to those whom He loves. By your baptism you are all, in a special way called and loved, therefore witness and pray that you may be my extended hands to this world which yearns for God and peace. Thank you for having responded to my call.”

God chose Mary, to be the Mother of His Son, a Son given to us. Is: 9: 6
For nine month's Mary carried Jesus in her blessed womb. After she gave birth to her first born Son, we are told she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger.

This Christmas season once again we welcome both Mother and child to receive in faith the blessing of His peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end.

MARY INVITES US TO PRAY AND WITNESS THAT GOD'S PEACE WILL PREVAIL IN EVERY HEART

Mary comes with her Son, **“for Him to give you His peace.”** His peace is bestowed upon those who love Him sincerely, who do not break faith, but keep faith with Him, who keep his commandments and follow Him, in a renunciation of violence, and all forms of hostility, aggression and destructive habits.

Even during our Christmas Celebrations, sadly, we have seen the rods of oppressors and bloodstain cloaks in places like Nigeria, Syria and other parts of the world.

This child of Peace, Mary's Son, calls us all to **peace** and to be **peacemakers**.

As we unite in prayer and witness to God's great love and good will towards us, in sending His Son, for our salvation and encouragement, may Jesus Prince of Peace cause the footgear of battle to be burnt and consumed by the fire of His Divine love.

BY YOUR BAPTISM YOU ARE ALL IN A SPECIAL WAY CALLED AND LOVED

This month's message reminds us also of our baptismal calling. Each one of us is called by name and loved into the new life of grace through our baptism.

Today many who feel unloved need to be loved. They need to know that God loves them, that God first loved them and still loves them.

We all need a sense of being accepted unconditionally. God accepts us as we are, but, that does not mean He approves of all that we do, especially if our words and actions or omissions hurt and wound other members of the Body of Christ, the Church.

One important aspect of our baptismal calling is to witness to Christ in the world, to bring the message and Spirit of Christ to those who have not yet heard such Good news. We who have found the Christ of God must tell and show others how to seek and find the light of salvation, how to find the Saviour today.

During this time of grace we seek the face of the Lord just as the shepherds sought and found the child Jesus exactly as they had been told wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

This child we seek is both God and man, and that is why the angels sing Glory to God in the highest heavens and peace on earth to men who enjoy his favour.

In this child of Bethlehem we have someone to love, someone to care for, someone to please, and the best way we can please Him is to accept that we are accepted unconditionally and loved by Him, and, it pleases Him most of all to give Him what he came to save us from, namely our sins, so he can fill us with His love and peace.

We cannot save ourselves from our sins unless we call upon the Name of the Lord to be saved. Our first step towards the light of our salvation is to accept that we have all sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God, but, by sending His Son, Jesus, to save us, God has filled us with 'hope', the hope of being saved and redeemed by His merciful love.

Let us all make haste in faith to seek and find the child Jesus, who alone can save our world from sinful folly and death.

Just as Mary carries in her arms the child Jesus and brings Him close to bless us with His peace, we too, will be her extended hands of life, peace, joy and love when we accept and submit to the word which has been planted in us and can save our souls and the souls of others.

May this Holy child of Bethlehem, Mary's child and Son, increase and strengthen our faith in Him, that in all our trials, temptations and weaknesses, we may turn to Him, who is also Mighty God and Eternal Father and know, His peace has no end.

I wish you all a very grace filled and Blessed New Year when it comes. Let us pray for one another and that we may witness through the prayers of Mary Queen of peace a new era where peace will triumph.

May the Lord bless you and keep you and cause His face to shine upon you and give you His peace.

God bless you.

Fr Ciaran