

Series: PEACE (Advent 2011) ENGLISH

Contents

<i>Y1 Peace</i> - Awake to deeper truth	2
<i>Y2 Peace</i> - Produce the fruit of a deeper perspective	3
<i>Y3 Peace</i> - Deep peace and joy	4
<i>Y4 Peace</i> - The peaceful birth	5
Advent Lectionary, Year A.....	6

Series Profile:

Series name: Peace

Series Description: How the Gospel readings of Advent 2011 lead us to the peace that passes all understanding.

Series Keywords: Y-series Peace Peace-series Christian-inspiration Peace awakeing God Jesus christ Gospels Christian inspiration Advent 2011 giving birth to Christ

Script for ADVENT_A_1 English

Y1 Peace - Awake to deeper truth

Daily we face the challenge: Keep watch, for you do not know the day. But we are too busy to face the Truth that unites us.

Every year, every month, every day we face a spiritual challenge: Be awake! Attend to what is important! Open your mind and heart to *real peace*; hunger for *real peace*. Jesus puts it in this way: Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. (*Matthew 24: 42*) St Paul tells Timothy: "Be ready in season and out of season. But you be watchful in all things..." (*2 Timothy 4:2-5*)

But every year, every month, every day, we have too much on our daily agenda to be attentive to God's reality here with us! We are too busy to keep watch. We are too busy to attend to the important thing in life. We may be willing to let God control the future, but not to control the present. Jesus says it's urgent, but, well, maybe for me that's not urgent enough? God's reality, if we do not cover it up with all the many things we want to do, we have to do, unites me with myself - and with God. God's reality unites people with each other - and with God.

Do you know the story of the wise old Rabbi trying to explain to his students about going from darkness to light? He asked his students "How can you tell when the darkness ends and the day begins?" The students said, "It's when there is enough light to properly recognise an animal, or a tree." Gently, the Rabbi explained, "No, it's when you can look at a man or a woman and recognise them as your brother and sister. For if you cannot recognise your brother - even yourself - in the face of a stranger, the darkness has not yet begun to melt away; and the light has not yet come."

*Readings: Isaiah 2:3-4 (peace on the mountain of the Lord), Psalm 122 (peace of Jerusalem)
Matthew 24:37-44, 2 Timothy 4:2-5*

EasterSpirit peace peace-series every-day awake watch watchfulness wake-up God's-reality unites-me-with-myself unites-people-with-each-other Christian-inspiration Advent Advent-2011 story rabbi recognize-your-brother darkness light real-peace present present-moment God Jesus Christ solidarity

Script for ADVENT_A_2 English

Y2 Peace - Produce the fruit of a deeper perspective

How to live in the spirit of the "new person", and why this seems like foolishness.

John the Baptist told the Pharisees who came to him in the desert: "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." (*Matthew 3:8*) The original Greek word for repentance, "*metanoia*", really means changing your perspective from the ordinary viewpoint to the large viewpoint: the deeper self, where God dwells. For any of us, this would be a kind of waking up, or a kind of *new birth*, a fruit of a deeper perspective that comes to the surface.

The more we permit this perspective to rise in us, the more we live as the "new self" or the "new man" that St Paul mentions, the "new man" who, as he says is "created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (*Ephesians 4:24*; see also: *Romans 6:3-5*; *1 Corinthians 1:30, 6:11*; *1 Peter 1:14*). We are called to walk in the Spirit of the new man. We can let this happen the more we rest happily in God, instead of resting in our natural man or ordinary self.

We usually live by the ordinary viewpoint, and that "natural man" as St Paul calls it, is darkened, it's like wearing dark sunglasses in a beautiful temple at night - you cannot see the beauty. Paul tells the Corinthians, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:14). "They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts." (*Ephesians 4:18*).

God through Christ gives us the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. Therefore, as St Paul tells the Corinthians, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (*2 Corinthians 5:17*). It's the old man, or the natural man, that has "gone" and the new man has come, in Christ, for as Paul tells the Colossians, "you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator" (*Colossians 3:9-10*).

And the fruit of the deeper or higher perspective is a peace, "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding" (*Philippians 4:7*).

Y2 Peace EasterSpirit peace-series Christian-inspiration Christian scripture gospel gospels transformation God Jesus Christ contemplation contemplatio Catholic Baptist Pharisees metanoia repentance perspective large-viewpoint new-birth deeper-perspective natural-man ordinary-self self spiritually-discerned darkened-in-their-understanding Corinthians Ephesians Holy-Spirit in-Christ new-Creation

Script for ADVENT_A_3 English

Y3 Peace - Deep peace and joy

Wonderful events are promised - in us. Forgiveness, spiritual healing, spiritual resurrection, and the desert shall bloom.

John the Baptist used to tell his listeners that God would be angry at those who are on the wrong path. But he did not seem to know that God takes the initiative with a love that saves those who are not worthy; it was Jesus who showed us this.

Actually John the Baptist was quite worried about Jesus, because John expected the Messiah to destroy bad people, but Jesus didn't do so. Jesus did recognise John the Baptist as the one who paved the way for him, for Jesus. But when John, while in prison, sent messengers expressing John's doubts about Jesus, Jesus sent the messengers back pointing to the fruits of Jesus' own, healing and forgiveness, ministry. And he also gave them this mysterious blessing: "And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me" (*Matthew 11:6*)

Blessed are we who do not close our hearts to Jesus Christ — this, surely, is the main meaning of *faith*: opening our hearts in trust. Jesus' ministry of healing and forgiveness shows us, if we want to see, that opening our heart to God in trust results in wonderful forgiveness and wonderful healing. Spiritual ears and spiritual eyes are opened. The spiritually dead come to life. The spiritually poor have the good news brought to them. The kingdom of God, always within reach, is now our home.

Maybe this is what the prophet Isaiah, over 700 years earlier than John and Jesus, was foreseeing in a symbolic way - the internal healing, the seeing, the fullness of life when lived in Christ, the divine life on earth. A time of deep peace and joy.

*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom . . .
The eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert
(Isaiah 35:1,5-6).*

Y3 Peace EasterSpirit peace-series Christian-inspiration Christian scripture gospel gospels transformation God Jesus Christ contemplation contemplatio Catholic fruits forgiveness healing resurrection spiritual-healing spiritual-resurrection wonderful good-news kingdom-of-God Isaiah wilderness desert rejoice blossom fullness-of-life in-christ divine-life

Script for ADVENT_A_4 English

Y4 Peace - The peaceful birth

The heights and depths of ourselves. But we are not our own!

Paul reminds us about the depths or heights of ourselves: Do you not know, he tells the Corinthians, that your body is a **temple of the Holy Spirit**, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; (1 Corinthians 6:19). It's God's temple, and there is no good place in our life for idol-worshipping such as our ordinary self or ego always tends to do.

The Psalmist asks: Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol... Such is the generation of those who seek ... your face, O God... (Psalm 24:3-6)

What does happen on the hill of the Lord, where we enter the temple of the Lord? Well, what happens in ourselves, we who are the "temple of the Holy Spirit", when we enter the temple? What happens is that we give birth to Christ, to God-with-us. Around 750 BC Isaiah prophesied: "The young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel" [God-with-us.] (*Isaiah 7:10-16*) In the world of today, Fr John Main¹ says that every moment is a moment of Christ [of God-with-us] if we are present to it. We give birth to Christ, and we transmit Christ to others through our life and work.

You and I are challenged by God to freely do God's will. When a person accepts, then, as famous historian Arnold Toynbee declared, "his reward for willing what is the will of God is that he finds himself taken by God into partnership in the doing of God's creative work"². Definitely not a project of my ego!

Such is the way of inner peace. It's not our peace, but His Peace. 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*)

Y4 Peace EasterSpirit peace-series Christian-inspiration Christian scripture gospel gospels transformation God Jesus Christ contemplation contemplatio Catholic God Jesus Christ temple-of-the-Holy-Spirit temple-of-the-Spirit temple-of-God give-birth give-birth-to-Christ every-moment transmit-Christ our-life freely-do-God's-will Toynbee taken-by-God ego ordinary-self inner-peace His-peace do-not-be-afraid

¹ - John Main OSB (1926–1982) was a Roman Catholic Benedictine monk and priest who presented a way of Christian meditation

² - Arnold J. Toynbee wrote, "The course of human history consists of a series of encounters between individual human beings and God in which each man or woman or child, in turn, is challenged by God to make his free choice between doing God's will and refusing to do it. When Man refuses, he is free to make his refusal and to take the consequences. When Man accepts, his reward for willing what is the will of God is that he finds himself taken by God into partnership in the doing of God's creative work."
<http://www.brojed.org/commentary.php>

Advent Lectionary, Year A - 2011

[First Sunday of Advent](#) (November 27, 2011)

Isaiah 2:1-5 Psalm 122 Romans 13:11-14 Matthew 24:37-44

[Second Sunday of Advent](#) (December 4, 2011)

Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-17, 18-19 Romans 15:4--9 Matthew 3:1-12

[Third Sunday of Advent](#) (December 11, 2011)

Isaiah 35:1-6,10 Psalm 146:6-10 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11 Luke 1:47-55

[Fourth Sunday of Advent](#) (December 18, 2011)

Isaiah 7:10-14 Psalm 24:1-6, 17-19 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25

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