

The Peace Of Christ

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World to come, THE PRINCE OF PEACE." (Isaiah 9:6)

From Bethlehem to Calvary Christ's vocation was to bring true peace to men. His mission was to preach the gospel of peace, as He did in His Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

The sinful woman who weeps at His feet and the poor woman who dares only to touch the hem of His garment found, in turn, pardon and health. Both heard Christ's consoling words: "Go in peace!" (Luke 7:50; 8:48)

Before sending His apostles and disciples out to preach in His name, He instructed them how to act as His envoys:

"Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace be there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you." (Luke 10:5-6; Matthew 10:12-13)

Of course, He continually enjoined His followers to live in charity which is the fruit of peace. "Be at peace with one another," He told them. (Mark 9:49)

THE PEACE OF Christ was not a cheap peace or a peace at any price. It costs something to possess the peace of Christ. Almost in the same breath

that He promised His followers peace, He also warned them that they must face up to trouble, the hatred of the world. "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before you." (John 15:18)

In the same hour that He promised His disciples joy, He warned them that they would "weep and lament but the world will rejoice." (John 16:20)

The Prince of Peace who came to give men life, told that He would die on a cross and insisted that all help Him carry the cross. "He who does not take up his cross and follow me, is not worthy of me." (Matthew 10:38)

WHEN HIS OWN nation rejected Him, Christ was sorrowful because in rejecting Him the Jews also rejected their chance for peace, God's peace. Therefore, on entering Jerusalem for the last time, He wept and said to the Holy City:

"If thou hadst known, in this thy day, even thou, the things that are for thy peace! But now they are hidden from thy eyes." (Luke 19:42)

Finally on the last night of His earthly life, Christ gave His apostles a promise of lasting joy and true peace . . .

"Peace I leave you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives to you I give to you. Do not let your hearts be

troubled or be afraid." (John 14:27)

And His apostles and followers, Christ explained, would find true peace and joy through obedience to God's will.

"If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love, as I also have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

"These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." (John 15:10-11)

EVEN ON THE CROSS, Christ preached the gospel of peace, the peace which the angels proclaimed at Bethlehem. From the cross the Prince of Peace offered peace to His enemies, His friends, the world, and to all of us.

He offered peace to His enemies: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)

He offered peace to the good thief: "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43)

From the cross Christ gave gifts of peace to His Mother and His beloved apostle John. "Woman, behold thy son." These words bestowed a new dignity upon Mary, making her the Mother of Peace, the Mother of all men represented

in John. And when Christ said to His apostle, "Behold thy Mother," John and all men of good will with him found a new spiritual Mother. (John 19:26-27)

Christ's final words from the cross were: "It is finished!" (John 19:30) . . . "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." (Luke 23:46) These final prayers of the dying High Priest proclaimed final victory over sin and the return of Divine Love to the world. Christ had finished His work of bringing peace back to the hearts of men.

Three days after His death, the Prince of Peace arose victoriously from the tomb. His first appearance to His apostles was like the dawn of a new Bethlehem. In accents similar to those in which the angel

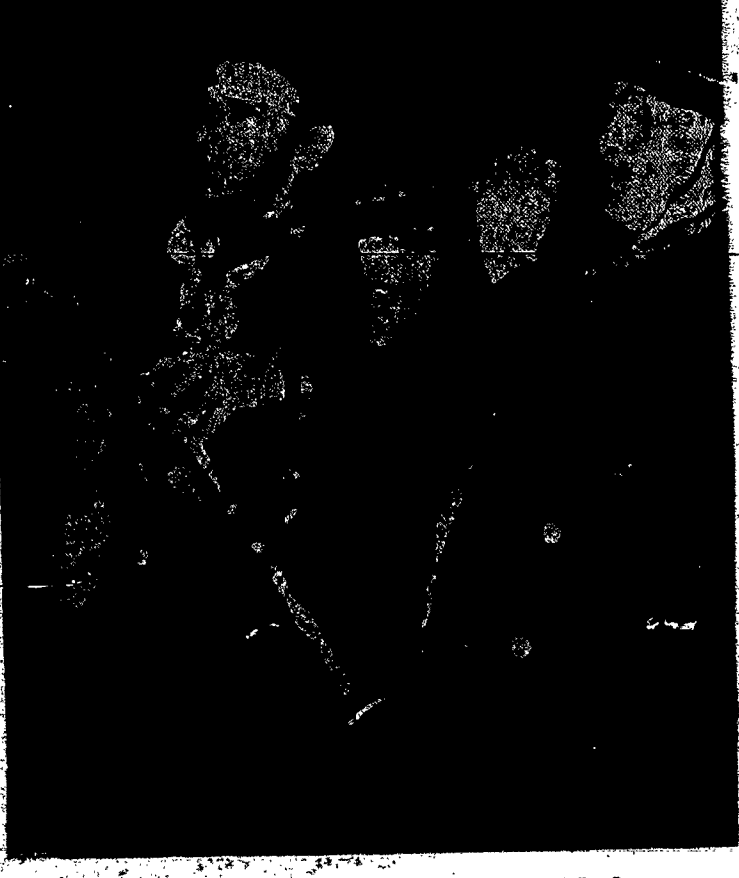
heralded His birth, the risen Christ revealed His resurrection:

"Peace to you! It is I, do not be afraid." (Luke 24:36)

The story of the Prince of Peace begins and ends the same way, with a triumphant promise of peace for the world, for men who do God's will.

"Glory to God in the highest, and PEACE ON EARTH among men of good will."

Marymount Scholarship
Tarrytown, N.Y.—(NC)—Marymount College here is offering four-year tuition scholarships. Applications must be filed by January 15.



Bagpipes For Rome's Yule

Rome—(NO)—A merry note to Rome's Christmas observance was the "Zampognari," shepherds from the countryside surrounding Rome who come into the city at Yuletide. They sleep in doorways by night, and by day, play ageless folk melodies on their bagpipes throughout the streets.

The Three Masses For Christmas

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spanned of twenty centuries.

After the midnight Mass at Bethlehem, clergy and laity take the path leading back to Jerusalem. They trod the fields where long ago "shepherds watched their flocks" and in the sky stars twinkle where once a greater star shone its message to the world.

The walk to the capital city brings the Christians to the entrance gate at just about dawn.

A SECOND Mass is offered and its words reflect the fields and family sentiment of people who have had time to meditate on the humility of God who became human for our sakes.

The dawn Mass (its first word in Latin is "Lux—light") is the story of a divine invitation and how gracious is the host who calls us to be His guests.

The gospel puts us in company with the shepherds to find "Mary and Joseph and the infant lying in the manger." When we gaze at the helpless Child, we ask, "Why did God come in this guise? Why not as a mighty angel or as a powerful warrior?"

Already the epistle has the answer — it is because of "the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour."

OPEN ANY PAGE of the life of Christ and you always meet the goodness, the loveliness of our Lord. He comes as if helpless to help us who indeed are helpless. And He comes not to lead us by brute force, but to win us by His peace to a life of peace. Again another consecration bell and God comes with pardon and peace to our altar and to our hearts.

WHEN FINALLY the late morning solemn Mass in the cathedral of Jerusalem. As if in some medieval castle, the pomp and panoply of kings is unfurled, trumpets and choirs acclaim the Saviour as the Christians' King, the great High Priest whose blood is to be the price of our citizenship in heaven.

To climax the salute to Christ our King, the morning Mass has a special last gospel — the wise men, kings from the east, they come with their gifts to bow before the Lord.

THESE HOLY LAND customs have been imitated in Rome for centuries. A midnight Mass is offered at the great church of our Lady, St. Mary Major, Rome's Bethlehem because a relic of our Lord's crib is kept there. The dawn Mass is celebrated at the church of St. Anastasia, a Greek martyr whose name means "dawn." Then the morning Mass brings Rome's throngs back to our Lady's church.

Many missals indicate this Roman custom by printing at the start of each Mass the words: "Station at St. Mary's, or St. Anastasia."

From Rome the triple Mass custom spread to other cities and finally became the special privilege of every priest.

Today the original midnight-dawn-morning schedule cannot always be observed.

Some priests must wait until 11 A.M. to say their first Mass, their "midnight" Mass. They follow it immediately with dawn and morning Masses. When a priest is assigned

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How to Judge a Nursing Home

1. How does the neighborhood look? Is there a place to sit outdoors?
2. Is the home covered by Hospital Trained Staff around the clock?
3. How many men and women are on the staff? What training have they had? Is there one employee for every five patients?
4. Does each bedroom contain a bedside table, lamp, easy chair, drawer space, closet, buzzer beside the bed? Are residents permitted personal possessions?
5. Are the bath facilities adequate? Are there non-slip materials on bathroom floors and stairways, handrails beside tubs and showers?
6. Is there an automatic fire alarm, extinguishers?
7. Are patients neatly dressed? What kind of expression do you see on their faces? Do they participate in any activities? How do they spend an average day? Are the ambulatory patients separated from the bed-ridden?
8. How do the menus compare with what your parent has been eating? What's the kitchen like? Is tray service available for bed patients?
9. Can patients have personal physicians?
10. What are the rules of admission, visiting, delivery and dispatch of mail? What is the basic cost?

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