

## 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT—Year B—M12-D06-Y2020

01. *“Therefore beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by Him at peace.”* With these words from St. Peter in the second reading, the Apostle urges us to seek peace and to make peace a priority. Because **peace—the peace that ONLY God can give—is one of the keys to conquering our fears and worries—and to living a life full of hope and joy—a life pleasing to the Lord.**
02. Of course, all of us desire peace—and all of us are searching for peace of some kind — whether it be peace **within our world, within our borders, or within our own homes — or whether it be simply peace in our minds and hearts.**
03. Especially in these turbulent times, when there is **so much turmoil and unrest around us**—both in nature, and in human affairs — **many are desperate, more than ever, for some sense of peace.**
04. But although peace is one **of the most valuable and sought-after things in life—peace is also one of the most elusive things to find.** And, as a result, people look to ALL SORTS OF THINGS for peace — some searching for **peace in possessions and pleasure — some in wealth and power — some in religion and spirituality —** and some in other people—whether it be family and friends, **or political, religious, and cultural leaders.**
05. And because peace is such a high commodity, there are **many today who consider themselves ambassadors and prophets of peace—** selling and offering peace to us in various forms — in the form of **consumerism and materialism — in the form of political and social ideologies — in the form of religious scrupulosity and extremism — in the form of technological advancement —** and in the form of various political and religious leaders.
06. The problem is that in the ENTIRE HISTORY of the human race—**none of these things have really brought us any true and lasting sense of peace — IN FACT,** in many cases, they have truly robbed us of peace.

07. Because the problem with the kind of peace THE WORLD tries to give us—and that these false ambassadors of peace are selling us—is that it is based on things OUTSIDE OURSELVES — **for the world tells us that peace can only be found in things like political and social stability—financial security—the freedom to pursue life's goods and pleasures without any moral restrictions**—as well as the power to control others, and to control one's circumstances.
08. But this kind of peace has **no regard for others—and depends on being able to control things OUTSIDE OURSELVES** — which, in reality, is a FALSE KIND OF PEACE—one that will eventually leave us **fearful, restless and troubled** — because, ULTIMATELY, **we never really have control over things outside ourselves.**
09. In other words, true peace CANNOT be achieved by getting our own way — because real and lasting peace does not come from **everything and everyone around us BENDING to OUR will—but only from things WITHIN ourselves.**
10. And this is the kind of peace the Lord wants to give us — **one that lives INSIDE of us, and doesn't depend on things OUTSIDE of us** — one that transcends this earthly reality, and doesn't depend on things we cannot control.
11. And so, the peace that the Lord wants to give us is a peace **FAR BEYOND anything this world understands, and this world can give** — a peace that won't leave us fearful, restless, and troubled — a **peace that doesn't depend on harmony AROUND US, but on harmony WITHIN US** — a peace that doesn't depend on OUR will being done, but on God's Will being done — **for God Himself is the ONLY source of true and lasting peace.**
12. And this is the kind of peace that NOTHING OR NO ONE can ever take from us. **Because no matter what is happening around us—no matter what is happening in the world and in our lives—nothing can change the fact that God loves us—that God is with us—and that He holds each of us in the Palm of His Hand.**

13. And no matter what the circumstances of our life—the peace that **God gives us transcends these circumstances, and is victorious over them** — so that these circumstances are no longer an occasion for fear and worry, but occasions for faith, hope, and trust.
14. Because the Father Who created us—the Father Who loves us—the Father Who gave us everything He could possibly give to us, **everything that He HAS to give—has made His home with us—and nothing can ever change that** — not even war, disaster, famine or persecution — **not even loneliness, addiction, sickness, or death** — NOT EVEN a deadly pandemic. Because the Father has us FIRMLY in His grip—and **although these things may touch us, affect us, and even hurt us—they will never destroy us—and can only serve to make us stronger.**
15. During my OWN spiritual journey, I have always tried to find peace and harmony WITHIN, by creating peace and harmony WITHOUT. Because there was a big part of me that was convinced that **if I could exert ENOUGH control over my circumstances, and create harmony among them, I would have peace of mind.**
16. But this is the message of the world and the lie of the evil one. Exercising undue control over others, and over our circumstances, **only leads to frustration, and only results in fearful hearts and troubled minds** — because, again, we are never REALLY in control, because control is ultimately an illusion. **And so, I learned that in order to have peace of mind, I have to LET GO of control—and let God be in control—for true and lasting peace can only be found in surrendering our circumstances, not in controlling them.**
17. And, in my own search for peace, I also learned that in order to FIND peace, I have to MAKE peace with imperfection — **with my own imperfections, the imperfections of others, and the imperfections in my circumstances and surroundings**—because, AGAIN, true and lasting peace won't come from trying to recreate everyone and

**everything around me into my vision**—but only from accepting others and things as they are.

18. And so, on this the Second Sunday of Advent, Jesus comes to us **to shatter the illusions of peace in our time** — to expose ANY false offer of peace we MAY have bought into — **to challenge any ILLUSION of peace on which we may have built our lives.**
19. And during this holy Season of Advent, Our Lord invites us to examine our relationship with peace, and our search for peace — **to ask ourselves in whom or what is our peace found?** For if it is not God Himself—**then we have accepted a false offer of peace—and have settled for the ILLUSION OF PEACE** rather than any kind of meaningful and lasting serenity.
20. For, whereas ALL others are simply **ambassadors of peace—offering us a concept of peace that will ultimately fail us** — Jesus is the very source of peace itself—**being NOT ONLY the Prince of Peace, but the very incarnation of peace.**
21. So if we find ourselves still **anxious about the future, still fearful about the present, and still obsessed about the past** — if we find ourselves still worrying about our finance and our work situation — still worrying about our health and the health of our loved ones — **we need to ask ourselves if the offer of peace on which we have based our lives is really working** — for there is only ONE CONCEPT, and ONE OFFER of peace that truly works—the peace that ONLY Christ can give — the peace of relinquishing control, and **surrendering ALL our worries and cares to the one true God—** putting ALL our hope and trust in His infinite love for us. **AMEN.**