



ADVENT 2019 WRITING WITH OUR LIVES A NEW HISTORY OF PEACE

Then the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat. The calf and the young lion shall browse together, with a little child to guide them. *(Isaiah 11:6)*

1 First Sunday of Advent As you light the first candle on the Advent wreath, choose a few concrete practices that will make your life and world more peaceful during this season.

2 Martyrdom of the Churchwomen of El Salvador (1980) "Several times I have decided to leave El Salvador. I almost could, except for the children, the poor, bruised victims of this insanity. Who would care for them? Whose heart could be so staunch as to favor the reasonable thing in a sea of their tears and loneliness? Not mine, dear friend, not mine." Jean Donovan

3 Feast of St. Francis Xavier, patron of missions. Mother Teresa says we must each find our own Calcutta. Where is a situation of need nearby that calls to you?

4 Chose some act of penance today for the ways in which Christians have promoted violence, injustice, and war.

5 Pope Francis writes in *Laudato Si'*: "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience." Do I see conserving water, eliminating plastics, turning off unnecessary lights, eating less meat, as acts of holiness?

6 Death of peace maker Philip Berrigan (2002) "We don't have a peaceful relationship with the environment or with one another or with other nations and that means that we are really at war with God. If we can't handle the exquisite creation that God has entrusted to us in stewardship, if we can't have a peaceful and just relationship with creation and with one another, how can we have a solid relationship with God?"

7 Roughly 248,396 people have died from guns in the U.S. since the Newtown shootings (12/14/2012). Meditate on those numbers; contemplate the people.

"In front of me as I write is Fritz Eichenberg's picture of St. Vincent de Paul. He has a chubby child in his arms and a thin pale child is clinging to him. Yes, the poor we are always going to have with us, our Lord told us that, and there will always be a need for our sharing, for stripping ourselves to help others...But I am sure that God did not intend that there be so many poor. The class structure is of our making and our consent, not His." *Dorothy Day*

8 2nd Sunday of Advent Place a dish of earth near your Advent wreath to remind you to make peace with our precious planet by choosing to live more sustainably.

9 Immaculate Conception – Pray the Magnificat. Let Mary tell you what a world modeled on her song would look like.

10 Death of Thomas Merton (1968), “Peace demands the most heroic labor and the most difficult sacrifice. It demands greater heroism than war.”

11 Select a peace maker who intrigues you but about whom you don’t know much. Read a book about them. Make them your patron for 2020.

12 Gaze prayerfully at an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and pray to become, like her, an instrument of peace between cultures.

13 Reflect on these words of Rumi: “Fears and terror came to my door. Love answered and there was no one there.”

14 St. John of the Cross: *Advent Poem of St. John of the Cross:*

If you want, the virgin will come walking down the road pregnant with the Holy and say: I need shelter for the night. Please take me inside your heart. My time is so close. Spend some time today in silence, making room in your heart for the Holy.

“Our advent hope calls on us to write, with our lives, a new history, the history of lives lived in justice and peace.” *Elizabeth McAlister*

15 3rd Sunday of Advent The color of the Advent candle is rose because that is the color of the dawn sky. Where do you see signs of the dawning of peace in your heart; in our world?

16 Take a walk, outdoors or in your imagination, where your heart can be touched by the beauty of creation. Allow creation to teach you to be at peace.

17 As you write Christmas cards, say a prayer of peace for each person.

18 Pray today that all expectant parents will have the same reverence for their unborn child that Mary and Joseph did.

19 Savor a glass of water today and pray for those people who do not have access to fresh water or only with back-breaking labor.

20 Monitor your speech for violent words or expressions and ask the Prince of Peace to give you a peacemaker’s lips.

21 Winter Solstice – Pray by candlelight in thanksgiving for the sun and the gift of fire.

“No Justice, No Christmas.” *Sarah Thebarger*

22 4th Sunday of Advent Place a photo of a situation of war or violence near your Advent wreath and keep that situation in prayer during the week.

23 Spend some time praying in the darkness.

24 Hold in prayer a situation of war or other violence and pray as a mantra in rhythm with your breath the words of the angels of Bethlehem...Glory to God...peace on earth.

25 Christmas - Pray before the manger and let the vulnerability of God soften and disarm your heart.

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