



Title: Advent - Peace

Scripture

Matthew 3:1-12

At that time John the Baptist came to the desert of Judea and started preaching. "Turn away from your sins," he said, "because the Kingdom of heaven is near!" John was the man the prophet Isaiah was talking about when he said, "Someone is shouting in the desert, 'Prepare a road for the Lord; make a straight path for him to travel!'" John's clothes were made of camel's hair; he wore a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. People came to him from Jerusalem, from the whole province of Judea, and from all over the country near the Jordan River. They confessed their sins, and he baptized them in the Jordan.

When John saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to him to be baptized, he said to them, "You snakes—who told you that you could escape from the punishment God is about to send? Do those things that will show that you have turned from your sins. And don't think you can escape punishment by saying that Abraham is your ancestor. I tell you that God can take these rocks and make descendants for Abraham! The axe is ready to cut down the trees at the roots; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire. I baptise you with water to show that you have repented, but the one who will come after me will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. He is much greater than I am; and I am not good enough even to carry his sandals. He has his winnowing shovel with him to thresh out all the grain. He will gather his wheat into his barn, but he will burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out."

Prayer to St Julie Billiat

Saint Julie, through your great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, you were miraculously cured and favoured by many graces.

By your powerful intercession, obtain for us above all, a great trust in God in all the difficulties of life, the strength to accomplish in all things the adorable will of God, and the special grace we now ardently ask of you.

"We must have courage in the times we live in. Great souls are needed, souls having the interest of God at heart"

St Julie Billiat

Reflect: As we light the 2nd Advent candle we reflect upon peace. Sometimes peace can mean having stillness, calm and silence. For some it means the lack of conflict, torture, violence and fear. Other people yearn for peace of mind, for comfort, reassurance, love, a lack of worry...

- What does it mean to have peace in your life?
- What does it mean to have peace in the world?
- How can you help to bring peace to those you know and love?

The Prayer of St Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is discord, union.
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;



Lord, Prince of Peace,
Bring your stillness, calm, comfort and love to all those who are struggling with fear or anxiety. Bring your protection to those who live with the threat of conflict or violence.
Bring your peace to this place, to those of us gathered here in your name.
Amen

Focus on one each day

Pray For:

- Peace to come to those who need it.
- An end to torture, violence and human rights abuses.
- Our College community, that we are open to God's Word at this time.
- Those who are anxious or afraid.
- Those who feel especially lonely at this time of year.

Prayer in action this week:

- Visit someone who may be feeling lonely.
- Try to bring peace to College and home.
- Be a 'Bridge of Light' to someone.
- Spend some time in silence and stillness.
- Give to the Advent Challenge

Peace is not a thing to possess, but a way of possessing;
Peace is not a gift to be given, but a way of giving;
Peace is not a topic to teach, but a way of teaching;
Peace is not a theory to learn but a way of learning;
Peace is not an opinion to hold, but a way of holding;
Peace is not a resolution of strife, but a way of striving;
Peace is not a creed to preach, but a way of preaching;
Peace is not a God to serve, but a way of serving;
Peace is not a question to ask, but a way of asking;
Peace is not an answer to seek, but a way of seeking;
Peace is not a journey's end, but a way of journeying.
Lord, may we live in peace and help to bring peace to others,
Amen

Lord Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace;
Give us the grace to give to you all
our burdens.
Take away all anger, prejudice and
grudges that we find difficult to let
go of and help us along your path
to peace.
Amen

CAFOD Advent Prayer

God of hope,
You sent your only son into the world
- that he might light our way.
God of light,
as we prepare ourselves this Advent,
inspire us to share whatever we have
with those who do not have enough.
As we wait, in joyful hope,
for the coming of the Christ-child,
born in a Bethlehem stable, we pray
for all children, and especially for
those who face hardship or
difficulties.
May they be nurtured with respect
and dignity, and given the chances
they need to do well.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen

O living God, God of all the earth, send down the Spirit of your
son, Jesus Christ;
heal our wounded hearts;
make peace in the place of conflict;
grant love in the face of revenge;
build hope where fear prevailed;
establish trust across our divisions.
Let the light of truth disperse the shadows, and the dawn of
justice banish hatred, that our lives may be saved, our land
restored, and the love of God be known in joy for all.
Amen

1804 Society – Review on their trip to Namur

The main theme that came from the visit was the fact that St Julie was a person as opposed to just a statue in school that they had seen over the years. Some students had not realised that she had been paralysed for so long. When she could walk again St Julie then travelled on tours to visit others and pass their message on. She physically walked or used horse and carriage. She was passing on spirituality and faith, about how God must be the centre of everything.

The Heritage Centre had different information stations about St Julie and Francoise's life and how they came from two different backgrounds. The students saw how both classes merged together. The students watched a video about spirituality and the main themes were about courage, ambition, determination and faith in God. She was an incredibly inspiring woman who has now become real to the students.

"Stay true to your faith and keep on believing"

"You can always get past obstacles in your life"

Lauryn, Abbie and Rebecca

Mr Rannard's views on the trip

The visit also allowed the students to walk the corridors, rooms, streets and churches that St Julie and Francoise also walked. I think this helped to provide a tangible experience of the convent and city of Namur which, even over 100 years later, retains many of the same characteristics.

Emphasis was also placed upon St Julie's teachings around simplicity. With this came her encouragement to abandonment, in particular towards God. On the final day St Honorine thanked the students and commented that many of the sisters at the convent had remarked that our students displayed qualities of true simplicity and quickly explained that, by this, they meant our students had no 'other side' to their character: they were genuine and truthful.

Jesus, help us as we
continue on our Advent
journey of faith and
peace.
Prepare our hearts to
receive you by ignoring
all the distractions going
on around us at this
time.
Make our preparation for
Christmas one that
centres on you, and
others, not ourselves or
material things.
Amen