

**ADVENT WREATH DEVOTIONS for
THE FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT
PEACE**

FIRST READER: This is the fourth Sunday in Advent. Today, we light all four candles on our wreath. On the first Sunday of Advent, we lit the candle of hope. The second Sunday, we lit the candle of love. The third Sunday, we lit the candle of joy. Today, we light the candle of peace. Our world is not always a peaceful world. People hurt other people. Countries are at war today. People don't take care of creation. People yell and scream at other people. But God promises peace. During Advent we pray that we, as well as all people, will seek God's peace.

Light the first, second, third, and fourth candles.

ALL: Sing or read together the hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem," hymn #78 in the 1982 Hymnal.

SECOND READER: When we look at the fourth candle, we remember God's promise of peace. We recall the words of Jesus in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." In times of war and hatred it's hard to remember that Jesus is the one who brings peace. As we approach Christmas we remember that God's intention is a place of peace where people shake hands instead of harm one another.

FIRST READER: Read **Luke 2:1-20**.

SECOND READER: The shepherds may have not felt very peaceful when they heard the words of the angel. They were probably scared and confused, but they followed those words, trusting in God. Sometimes all we see around us gives a message different from the message of peace. Yet we, like the shepherds, can follow God's words and trust in God's promises.

DISCUSSION: This Scripture reminds us that when we are fearful, we are often not thinking of peace. The angels calm the shepherds and send them forward with a task. Who are the people in our world who need God's peace? What are our hopes for peace in our world today? How do we help others know God's desire for peace in our world?

Compassionate God, thank you for your son, Jesus. Thank you for those in our world today who act for peace. Help us look for ways to be peacemakers at home, at church, at school, and at work. Make us peacemakers where ever we go. AMEN