

## **Reflection on the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord**

On Christmas Eve 1914 in the First World War, the guns fell silent in some areas of the Eastern and Western fronts. In a 2003 interview with one of the last surviving Scottish veterans of the war, he described what he felt the next morning "I remember the silence, the eerie sound of silence. Only the guards were on duty. We all went outside the farm buildings and just stood listening. And, of course, thinking of people back home. All I'd heard for two months in the trenches was the hissing, cracking and whining of bullets in flight, machine gun fire and distant German voices. But there was a dead silence that morning, right across the land as far as you could see. We shouted 'Merry Christmas', even though nobody felt merry. The silence ended early in the afternoon and the killing started again. It was a short peace in a terrible war."<sup>1</sup> In the midst of the war to end all wars it was a silent night, a holy night.

One hundred and ten years later, in the midst of so many conflicts in the world, there will still not be peace on earth, if even for just a day. After all these years, the world still has not welcomed the Prince of Peace, the only way to true peace on earth. It is often at this time of the year, that we pray for peace on earth, and wonder why Christ has not established this since His death and resurrection 2,000 years ago. People look for Christ's peace externally and don't search in their own hearts first for this peace. Peace on earth can't begin without peace in our souls. This is where peace begins. This is the peace that Christ offers each of us. "For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." (Eph. 2:14-18)

As we celebrate this feast of the Nativity of our Lord, let peace on earth begin first with peace in our hearts, peace in our families, peace in our neighborhoods, peace in our towns, our cities, our nation, and in the world. That peace begins when we commit to becoming bearers of God's peace in everything we do, saying constructive things when we wish to criticize others, praying for someone who hurts us, instead of getting angry and cursing them, reaching out to those in need, instead of thinking only about ourselves. "For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23) During this Nativity season, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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<sup>1</sup>[Interview from 2003 Archived](#) 17 December 2005 at the [Wayback Machine](#), originally published in *The Scotsman*, 25 June 2003, under the headline "Scotland's Oldest Man turns 107", by John Innes.)