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A Christmas prayer for peace

John Dear | Dec. 18, 2007 On the Road to Peace

Thank you, God of peace, for announcing the coming of peace on earth and for coming among us to make peace. Thank you for siding with the homeless, the refugee, the marginalized, the immigrant, the outsider, the disenfranchised, the imprisoned, the enemy. Thank you for being good news for the poor and the oppressed.

Thank you for your incarnation in the nonviolent Jesus, for showing us the Way, the Truth, the Life of Peace. Thank you for loving us so much, for bringing your universal, unconditional, nonviolent love into the world. Thank you for teaching us how to live, how to love, how to serve, how to pray, how to make peace, how to show compassion, how to practice nonviolence, how to resist empire, how to suffer, and how to die.

Thank you for calling us away from violence, injustice and empire into the new life of nonviolence, justice, community and resurrection.

Most of all, thank you for teaching us how to be human. Alas, so many of us want to play god that we've become inhuman. You, God of peace, on the other hand, let go of your divinity to share our humanity, and in the process, teach us how to be Godly.

Dear God, we celebrate the birth of the nonviolent Jesus, his life and love, his teachings and works, his steadfast resistance, and his suffering, death and resurrection. We celebrate the most nonviolent life in human history, the greatest peacemaker the world has ever seen. We celebrate how his life and love continue to disarm, heal, and transform us all.

This Christmas, give us the grace to imitate his life, to become new people of creative nonviolence like him. Help us to become practitioners of peace, contemplatives of peace, teachers of peace, apostles of peace, prophets of peace. Help us abolish systemic injustice, resist empire, end war, dismantle weapons, and study war no more, that we might reverence life and creation as he did.

Bless us that we might be your beloved sons and daughters, peacemakers, people who love one another, love our neighbors, and love our nation's enemies. Bless us that we might be a new Christmas people, who, like Mary and Joseph, welcome Christ into the world, see Christ in the poor, serve Christ in the world's children, raise Christ through our nonviolent actions, and bring Christ's Christmas gift of peace on earth to fruition in our lives and work.

Help us all to honor Jesus by obeying his commandments, following his footsteps and doing what he did, that we too might incarnate your holy spirit of peace and nonviolence.

This Christmas, God of peace, bless us all over again, that we might live with a new, mature faith, that we might become peacemaking saints, that we might be instruments of your Christmas gift of peace on earth.

Bless us all, that suffering may end, that all may be healed, that all may live in peace, that all may radiate your love, that all may be one.

In the name of the nonviolent Jesus. Amen.

John's column will return on Jan. 8th. "The Narrow Path," a new DVD featuring John Dear, is available from **www.sandamianofoundation.org** **[1]**. He is still awaiting his sentencing in Federal Court for last year's antiwar protest. To attend one of John's lectures or retreats, or to schedule a speaking event, see see **www.johndear.org** **[2]**.

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[1] http://www.sandamianofoundation.org
[2] http://www.johndear.org