

Dear Friends,

In this time of war, we wonder about the possibilities of peace. Is it possible for enemies to live in harmony? Is it possible that God's kingdom will one day be a place where people, despite their glaring differences, will actually get along; maybe even love one another?

Or, would we rather that logic should prevail over God's kingdom? Are sworn enemies supposed to get along like wolves being guests of lambs? Why should we let go of resentments so that lions might eat hay like the ox? Why abandon our prejudices to see the goodness of those we might not like? Why should the baby play by the cobra's den? Isaiah's image of the ideal world makes no sense at all; why should we hope it could be a possibility? Because it's God's kingdom, not our own.

We are so easily blinded by our vision of how the world should be, and, from a human perspective, it seems that our world keeps spiraling further into the darkness of violence and hatred. The media picks it up for a little while, but then the news is forgotten. It's as if the violent events that plague our world become like a wall of hard, bitter hatred and cynicism making our world a darker, more dismal place in which to live.

Isaiah's vision is one of hope. It is God who brings salvation to the world, but we have to work with God as well. This season of Advent is an opportunity for us to open our eyes to the reality of God's grace at work in our lives. The Christ is coming, the Christ is here and he wishes to reveal the love of the Father to those who follow him. God's love opens our eyes to see that peace is possible even in this age of violence and war, prejudice and hate, anger and resentment. God's kingdom is meant to be one of peace, even if it doesn't make any sense to us. In order for us to live in that peace we must see God's kingdom in a new light: the light of love, a light that dispels all darkness.

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel