



Sunday, 12/4/16

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

READING: Isaiah 9:6-7

This passage is one of the most-quoted prophecies concerning the birth of Christ. The arrival of the Prince of Peace sounds joyful indeed. Why, then, did Jesus later say “Do you suppose that I have come to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division” (Luke 12:51)?

The wars and rumors of wars continue to disquiet us today, especially as a military community, with so many among us who have witnessed unspeakable violence. The very land upon which Jesus walked during his earthly ministry is now under constant tumult of violence, with internecine wars that have killed hundreds of thousands of people.

What is more, while we are fortunate not to be experiencing the same kind of war within our national borders, many of us have seen family conflict—“father against son and son against father”—over our decision to obey Christ. Our brothers and sisters overseas sometimes risk their very lives to make such a decision. Where, then, is our peace? Where is our Wonderful Counselor, upon whose shoulders rests the government?

The ancient Israelites to whom Isaiah originally preached this passage knew the pain of violence all too well. They were a “people who walked in darkness,” under constant threat of foreign oppression and violence. More oppression and violence would be in store for them in the future, just like more oppression and violence are in store for God’s people today. The good news of this passage is that Jesus also tells us “fear not! I have overcome the world.” The same burden of oppression that has lain on our shoulders, the Father has laid upon our King’s, and he is able to carry it.

What do you think? How should we understand the promises of Isaiah 9:6-7 today? How should they affect our lives?

-Jon Romaneski