



Diocese of Fall River
Office of the Bishop
Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.

Bishop da Cunha's 2022 Christmas Message

Dear Friends in Christ,

In the Gospel account by Luke, an angel appears to the shepherds to announce the birth of Christ, saying: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14).

From that Gospel has come the oft-used phrase in Christmas cards and carols, "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men." Perhaps we have shared this as a greeting during the season. Although meant as a sincere sentiment, one longed to be brought to fruition, the world continues to live in darkness.

For centuries, God tried to bring people together to live in harmony. They would always return to evil, sin, division, and rejection of God. Finally, God sent His Son, Jesus, to become one of us and to show us, by word and deed, what God expects of us, and to show us how to live in love, peace, and harmony. The prophet Isaiah says, "For a Child is born to us, a Son is given to us; upon His shoulder dominion rests. They name Him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:5).

Yes, Jesus is the Prince of Peace; yet peace continues to elude us.

After 2000-plus years of Christianity, we live in a divided world confronting sin, evil, hatred, racism, injustice, and war. Because we have rejected the teaching of Jesus and the Word of God and have embraced a secularized way of life, we are facing these problems and seeing the suffering of so many people throughout the world.

I know we would all like to live in a world guided by justice, peace, harmony, and love. A world that is reflective of the light and peace of Jesus. The way to embrace the life God intends for us is to return to the Lord, listen to his Word, and follow his teachings. Otherwise, the world, each one of us, and especially the next generation, will pay a very high price.

My profound hope this Christmas is that hearts everywhere will be open to Jesus and that the gift of the peace of Christ will reign in our Diocese, in our country, and around our world. May harmony and understanding overcome discord and division wherever they exist.

In closing, let me assure you, my brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Fall River, that you have my heartfelt prayers and best wishes for a very happy, joyful, and Merry Christmas. May God bless you and your loved ones now and in the coming New Year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V.
Bishop of Fall River