

Christmas 2012

This Christmas comes with something of the cold sense of our humanity and the reality of our frailty. The sad events of December 14 at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, force us again to look into the face of evil.

I think that such evil is a human problem: both in those who misuse guns as individuals, and collectively as a society for failing to control the proliferation of guns. More deeply, we have created a culture of violence that somehow has concluded that being armed is a natural right. Violence begets violence. Much greater limitations on the possession and distribution of guns would impact their availability to be misused by those people who are unstable and full of hate. Further, we need in the New Year to reflect, personally and as a nation, on our willingness to accept violence and greed as acceptable and even celebrated.

More importantly this Christmas, we look to the one called the Prince of Peace, and we are called to work for His Kingdom of Justice and Love in our own small ways every day. We need to pray for those killed (including the shooter) and, especially, for those now impacted — students, teachers, families, and our nation — by this violence. We also must work for greater gun control laws, and against our culture of (and personal inclination toward) individualism, consumerism and violence.

This age is no different than ages past — human beings haven't changed that much since we evolved to walking upright on the plains of Africa — except we have greater means of violence and destruction, and we can now destroy the earth itself as well. The God of Love still offers a vision of peace with justice, inclusion and joy.

The violence of our age affects children throughout the world and even in the neighborhoods of Hawai'i. As the children of a loving God, we can — we must — make a difference as the heralds of the Prince of Peace.

“O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas. Put into the hearts of men [and women] this peace for which they sometime seek so desperately and which you alone can give. Help them to know one another better, and to live as brothers [and sisters], children of one Father. Reveal to them also your beauty, holiness and purity. Awaken in their hearts love and gratitude for your infinite goodness. Join them all together in your

love. And give us your heavenly peace. Amen, Amen.” A Prayer to the Child of Bethlehem, by Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (John XXIII, Bishop of Rome)

May endless Joy and Peace and Love, the Blessed Savior’s gifts from heaven above, shine like candles in the night to make your pathways clear, smooth and bright throughout 2013.

Mele Kalikimaka me ka Hau'oli Makahiki Hou!

+Bob

The Right Reverend Robert L. Fitzpatrick
+ Keali‘ikoaokeakua