



December 17

## Shake Hands!

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*(Continuation from Dec 16)*

**Reading: Matthew 1:18-25**

*"To guide our feet into the way of peace...  
the Dayspring from on High has visited us" (Lk 1:79)*

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For the past two days we meditated some ways and means to make Christmas celebrations meaningful. Let us study today how to use this Season to sew up torn relationships in the Name of the newborn!

### ● *Marital Relationships*

Before they came to marriage bed, Joseph discovered that Mary was pregnant. As per the Law, without any guilt he could have sent her away with a certificate of divorce (Dt 24:1). But he let Grace overrule Law! Two outstanding qualities of Joseph need to be applauded. He was considerate towards Mary in that he didn't desire Mary to be disgraced publicly. He was cooperative with God in that he accepted a pregnant woman as his wife, trusting the Word of the Lord (Mt 1:18-25). Whether or not she understood what the angel said, Mary submitted herself to the ways of God (Lk 1:26-28). Thus began the god-centered family life of Mary and Joseph.

One of the main reasons for the collapse of marriages is the spouses' inconsiderateness towards each other. Instead of keeping God as the centre, they become egocentric. When the going gets tough, they easily give up. Why don't they remind themselves of the angel's Word to Mary, "With God nothing will be impossible" (Lk 1:37)? The best Christmas gift of all is the presence of a happy family, all wrapped up with one another!

### ● *Social Relationships*

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6). The second part of the angelic song was, "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men!" (Lk 2:14). Rarely is there anyone among us who never wounded anyone. We have hurt so many with the sword of our tongue and our pen. Why don't we take advantage of this Season for reconciliation and restitution? Invite relatives with whom you are not in talking terms, whatever the reason. Send them a greetings card to break the silence. When the Son of God stooped down to become the Son of Man, why don't we humble ourselves? (Phil 2:5-8).

Visit the homes of your enemies and opposers with eatables. If they refuse to receive you, come back with a smile. The Lord will honour you for your initiative. The command is, "If it is possible, *as much as depends on you*, live peaceably with all men" (Rom 12:18). Let peace flow like a river in your heart and home and make this Christmas the best ever!

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