

Rediscover Christmas: Good News in Troubling Times  
Finding Peace in Our Struggles  
Luke 2:8-20

The Declaration of Christmas Peace is a tradition which launches the Christmas celebrations, and in a way, marks the official start of Christmas in the city of Turku, Finland. The exact wording used during the first few centuries of the tradition has been lost over time, but the main contents of the declaration remain the same: the declaration is read out loud to remind people that Christmas peace has begun, to advise people to spend the festive period in harmony, to threaten offenders with harsh punishments, and to wish all a merry Christmas.

1. Peace invades the storms of life.
2. Peace defies the stress of life.
3. Peace appears as the light of life.

Caesar could not transform the hearts of his subjects nor change any of their eternal futures. But the angels say this baby whose name would be Jesus could. This angelic proclamation is an announcement of a peace that goes deep within and lasts beyond the grave. Jesus is the bringer of peace between us and God, the sacrificial lamb, the giver of life. He is the embodiment of *shalom*, and He offers a wholeness that we can only find in relationship with Him.