

## *Silent Night*

**D**ecember 6, 1941 — [Seventy-three] years ago this week, my in-laws, Bill, Sr. and Doris Henck, awoke in Honolulu, Hawaii to yet another peaceful day. Bill's job with the US Navy had led him halfway around the world from his home in Maryland, and his fiancée followed within the year, marrying her groom the same day her plane landed in Hawaii. As newlyweds, each day was a honeymoon existence in this beautiful island area.

Now, they awoke to yet another day in their peaceful lives. Little would they know that the following morning would be like no other — the bombing of Pearl Harbor would change their idyllic existence to long hours of futile rescue efforts and days of terror. World history would be made as a result of the change from peace to war between December 6 and 7, 1941.

So, too, must we realize that if, in our humanness, we define our peace by our surroundings and our situation, it is as fragile as the lives of so many that fateful morning fifty-seven years ago.

Yet, at this season when we celebrate a silent night — when all was calm and all was bright — we need to remind ourselves that our only true peace can come from our Savior, whose birth we now celebrate.

His arrival on earth wasn't as peaceful as some expected. After days on a jostling donkey in route to a census in her ancestral home, a young unwed teenage girl gave birth to the King of Kings — not in a palace with attendants in waiting. Rather, peace on earth began in a stable, with a manger for our Lord's bed and a host of animals for witnesses. So, too, we often can find peace in obscure places if our Lord is there.

At this holy season, let us renew our focus on peace — not as the world gives and not something that can be changed in an instant by human forces — but, rather, on our Prince of Peace. Emmanuel. God is with us.

~ Anita Fitzgerald Henck  
Quincy, Massachusetts, USA

*Lord,  
As hope begins to bear its fruit in Your peace in our hearts on our journey this Advent Season, help us to remember that You are even more concerned about peace than we are. You looked at a world torn with the ravaging effects and results of sin and knew that we had no chance without You. It is our own personal peace of heart and mind that You gave Your Son to reclaim for us. Take our personal war and give us peace in the midst of the battle. Amen.*

### *Silent Night*



*Silent night, Holy night  
All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin, mother and child  
Holy infant, tender and mild  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.*

*Silent night, Holy night  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.*

*Silent night, Holy night  
Shepherds quake, at the sight  
Glories stream from heaven above  
Heavenly, hosts sing Hallelujah.  
Christ the Savior is born,  
Christ the Savior is born.*