

A very Franciscan Christmas

CHRISTMAS PEACE

In contemplating the nativity scenes which appear in churches, homes and public places during Advent, do we see what St Francis saw – the sacredness of every created being? And if we do see this, how can we *rebirth the sacred in us as nations, religious organisations, as communities and families*. We need to move into relationship with those who are considered unlike us? From this new birth emerges (J. Newell. 2014. 98).

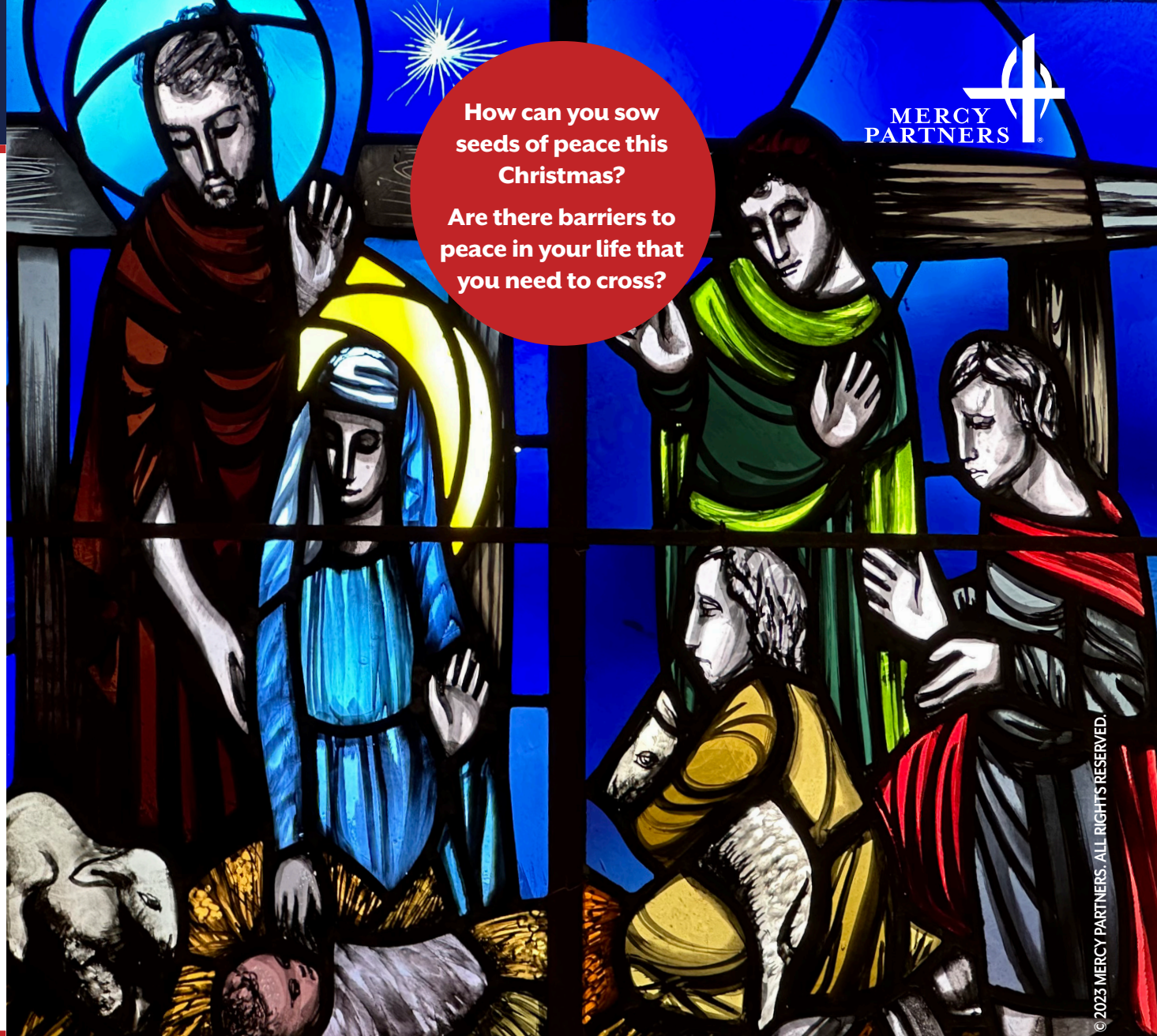
The call for peace at Christmas is a challenge to all of us. How do we build peace in our homes, communities and countries? How do we replace the language of competition, of exclusion, of battle with the language of love? How can we be more open to the wisdom and blessing of traditions other than our own, in people who are from different cultures and with different worldviews?

O'Donohue reminds us that

... the human heart is never completely born. It is birthed in every experience of our lives. Everything that happens to us has the potential to deepen us. They bring to birth within us new territories of the heart (Adapted 1997. 26).

A child in a manger is God's way of telling us that life is a process of eternal newness, unending openness and passion without end

(J. Chittister. 1999. 147).



How can you sow seeds of peace this Christmas?

Are there barriers to peace in your life that you need to cross?

Holy One, Essence of Kindness

As we journey through this Advent Season inspire us to be bearers of love, through our messages of hope, our shared smiles, our generosity our forgiving hearts, our listening ears and our words of understanding. Help us to be living signs of your love dwelling amongst us. Amen

(Adapted from: Joyce Rupp. *Return to the Root*. 2021. 225).