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Peace Sunday - 14 January 2018

***'Migrants and Refugees - seekers of peace'***

Dear Father,

The 51<sup>st</sup> World Peace Day will be celebrated in England and Wales on 14 January 2018. No one can be unaware of the tens of thousands of people around the globe who have been displaced and forced to leave their homes because of violence or climate-related disasters. Many in this country have responded to the invitation to shelter the stranger and more are involved in campaigns to stem this tragic flow in their work to challenge the arms trade and to protect our environment. With this timely theme, we are all invited to reflect on our role to be peacemakers, and peace seekers, today.

Once again Pax Christi encourages every parish to celebrate the theme and share the World Peace Message on Peace Sunday. Our Peace Sunday booklet, enclosed with this mailing, offers prayers, homily reflections, children's activities and reflection materials. All of these resources are available on Pax Christi's website and the full World Peace Day message will also be posted here when it is available.

In his 2017 World Peace Day message Pope Francis reminded us that we are all artisans for peace. Pax Christi members and supporters are such artisans, sharing their own passion for peace with others through simple actions sustained by prayer. Over the past year Pax Christi has seen an increased demand for its wide ranging advocacy and campaigning resources.

Among other things we have

- Co-hosted seminars with universities in Birmingham, Leeds and Liverpool, on the theme *Nonviolence Works!* with powerful resource people: Marie Dennis, our international co-president and Maria Stephan, senior policy fellow of the United States Institute of Peace. This is part of our on-going work to promote Gospel nonviolence with the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative.
- Participated in the Vatican Conference on *A World Free from Nuclear Weapons* and encouraged members, parishes and other networks to pray and fast in support of a clear outcome from this Conference.
- Created a new Lenten resource *The Way of the Cross with reflections from the First World War Conscientious Objectors* and helped organise the annual ceremony for all Conscientious Objectors to war.
- Celebrated 35 years of our Peace Education Work and the foundation of the Christian Peace Education Fund. Our education worker spends on average 40 days a year in schools, reaching around 3,000 students through workshops and seminars.

This national level work is supported by a team of 4 staff members and volunteers. People are often surprised how much is achieved with so few people. For this work to continue, and hopefully grow, we need financial resources too. I am aware of the generosity of many parishes which take collections for Pax Christi on or around Peace Sunday. I ask you to support us again this year with a collection or donation to our work. It is all the more important as Pax Christi has made a deliberate choice not to be a charity in order to have the freedom and flexibility to take action which might otherwise be limited by constraints placed on charities.

With every blessing and good wishes,

+ Most Rev Malcolm McMahon OP, National President of Pax Christi British Section

[www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)