

Sharing a thought and a prayer

My soul proclaims the Lord my God,
My Spirit sings His praise!
He looks on me, He lifts me up
And gladness fills my days.

All nations now will share my joy
His gifts He has outpoured;
His little one He has made great;
I magnify the Lord

His mercy is forever more
His name I praise again.
His strong right arm puts down the
proud
And lifts the lowly high.

He fills the hungry with good things
The rich He sends away;
The promise made to Abraham
Is filled by him each day.

Magnificat, Magnificat,
Magnificat, praise God!
Praise God, praise God, praise God,
praise God,
Magnificat, praise God.



Women and Peace

Thank you for coming

Other events:

Saturday 28th March: Building Caritas in the Nottingham Diocese
10.30-4.30 Cathedral Hall

See www.paxchristi.org.uk



Women and Peace

An International Women's Day Event

1.45pm — 4.15pm

Parish Mass is at 5pm: You are welcome to stay



Reading 1 : The Magnificat Luke 1: 46-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my saviour; because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid. Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty has done great things for me.

Holy is his name, and his mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear him. He has shown the power of his arm, he has routed the proud of heart. He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly.

The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away. He has come to the help of Israel his servant, mindful of his mercy according to the promise he made to our ancestors.



Reading 2: Leymah Gbowee, in **Mighty Be Our Powers**

I sat there feeling sick to my soul. How could I have been so stupid as to think that a handful of women could stop a war? There was a video on the site: Two little boys had been brushing their teeth outdoors when the missiles hit.... The camera shifted to an old woman holding a baby. The baby's mother had come outside to hang up diapers. She had been standing next to the boys and she too was dead...

Suddenly I felt a rage greater than any I had ever known. If I'd had an AK47 right then, I would have returned to the conference room and slaughtered everyone inside.

The world shrank for me into this one moment.

I led our women into the hallway, then dropped down in front of the glass doors to the meeting room. More women came until there were two hundred of us. 'Sit at this door and loop arms,' I instructed them. 'No-one will come out of this place until a peace agreement is signed.'

Reading 3 Joy Mead,

Personal Peacemaking. An extract

Today I shall try to make peace
in practice and poetry.

I shall choose words and images carefully,
avoiding all that proscribes, restricts,
oppresses, destroys, humiliates,
patronises, enslaves.

I shall try to use words that open minds
and stretch imaginations;
words that show an alternative
to famine, war, racism, torture, unjust
structures, unjust trading systems,
violence, war, all that denies life.

I shall ask questions that stir the heart,
motivate the will,
stretch the imagination,
widen the moral vision,

So that life in all its fullness,
diversity and wonder will be cherished
on this fragile and finite planet.

I shall make this day, and every day,
a holy day;
I shall work, share, play and touch
Within a circle of wholeness.

Reading 4: Katarina Kruhonja, Pax Christi International, in 'Choosing Peace'

For us ordinary people the war in Croatia, the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia came suddenly, unexpectedly. We were confused and the war, the logic of war, was spreading like wild fire. The growth of nationalism and enemy-making and the armed attacks were overwhelming.

I found myself surrounded by Serbian forces who were bombing us. I started to think like everyone else that there was no other way. It is or them or us. What we can do? And while we were praying in a small group, we thought and talked about what love your enemies might mean in this very concrete situation. Someone said maybe the love for enemy in this situation is to kill him or them, to prevent him or them from committing more atrocities. That hit me very hard.

I started to think every day what would it be to love my enemy in the middle of the war? I couldn't find an answer, but I made a decision.

I said that killing my enemy is surely not how Jesus would love his enemy. So I chose to love my enemy as Jesus would. I didn't know what that would mean, but the choice itself really was my Passover from the logic of the violence. I would be able to live again.