

## PEACE SUNDAY 2022

Every year since 1968, each Pope has issued a Message for the World Day of Peace on January 1<sup>st</sup> - the very beginning of each year- reminding us all of the centrality of peace building and reconciliation to our Catholic faith.

The bishops of England and Wales have always designated the second Sunday of Ordinary Time (today) as the Sunday when every parish is encouraged to publicise and promote the Pope's Message for that year. This year's Message focuses on the importance of the different generations - the young and the old - working together to build lasting peace - working together in dialogue and action. It is a timely and relevant message in view of the increasing divide between the culture and life of young people and those of us who are old/er. As Pope Francis says "Young people need the wisdom and experience of the elderly while those who are older need the support, affection, creativity and dynamism of the young. Great social challenges" - and we are so aware of these at this time - "and peace processes necessarily call for dialogue between the keepers of memory - the elderly - and those who move history forward - the young".

"All can work together" Pope Francis says "to build a more peaceful world starting with the hearts of individuals and relationships in the family, then within society and with the environment and all the way up to relationships between peoples and nations." Pope Francis ends his message with this appeal " May more and more men and women strive daily, with quiet humility and courage, to be artisans of peace and may they be ever inspired and accompanied by the blessings of the God of Peace!"

*There are copies of the full text of Pope Francis's Message on the table at the back of church and on the Pax Christi website.*

This Peace Sunday also gives me the chance to appeal on behalf of Pax Christi, the International Catholic Movement for Peace which embodies in every aspect of its work, the principles of peace-making and peace-building that Pope Francis emphasises. Pax Christi itself was born out of the experience of war 76 years ago as a campaign of prayer for reconciliation between France and Germany and to encourage Catholics to work to bring an end to war. Today Pax Christi is an international network of people, inspired by our faith, to work for peace built on justice, on reconciliation and non-violent change. In England and Wales Pax Christi, through its small staff, volunteers and members,

- helps parishes to promote the Pope's Peace Message every year.
  - delivers peace education sessions to young people in schools.
  - challenges the global arms trade and the suffering and destruction it causes
  - promotes a just peace for Palestine and Israel
- and speaks up for non-violent approaches to conflict.

Pax Christi in this country is a very small organisation with shoestring finances. It has chosen not to be a charity so that it can speak out clearly in the name of papal teaching. It is largely dependent on donations, especially on Peace Sunday.

This year, like last year, feels - and is - different - *we have no donation envelopes to give out, but you can still donate to Pax Christi. For those of us in church there is a labelled basket at the back.* You can also donate online or by cheque - all the details for both ways are on the Pax Christi website [www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk) . *The Pax Christi website address is also in this week's parish newsletter.*

Thank you very much for listening and thank you in advance, on behalf of Pax Christi, for your generosity.